MISFITS AND REMNANTS

VENTURA AND SHEVITCH

REFERENCE LIBRARY * HOUGHTON MIFFLIN CO. * BOSTON, MASS.
Archive Collection
This book may not leave the Offices and if borrowed must be returned within 7 days

MISFITS AND REMNANTS

MISFITS AND REMNANTS

BY

L. D. VENTURA

AND

S. SHEVITCH

BOSTON
TICKNOR AND COMPANY
1886

Copyright, 1886,
By Ticknor and Company.

All rights reserved.

University Press:
John Wilson and Son, Cambridge.

This Book

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
TO

MRS. GEORGE HOWE,

BY THE AUTHORS.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Peppino	1
Only a Dog	51
Beppo	67
The "Herr Baron"	85
Our Nihilist	109
A Wrecked Life	129
The Stage Fiend	149
Graziella the Model	173
Who was He?	191
The Elf of Hohenheim	215

PEPPINO.

MISFITS AND REMNANTS.

PEPPINO.

IF you should ever go to New York, and on some fine day in the month of May should saunter, half on business, half for pleasure, in the direction of the Post-Office, take my advice, — do not get into the horse-car which goes through Union Square to Barclay Street, for you will surely be crushed to suffocation in the mass of stout women who seem to frequent these vehicles. Neither should you take an omnibus, — that relic of barbarism, that unblushing exhibitor of pretty ankles; but take my advice, I repeat, light a good cigar, and quietly pursue your way on foot, fol-

lowing the right-hand sidewalk. Not only will you have saved five cents, but you will see the beautiful things spread out to tempt you in the shop-windows; you will meet many pretty women; you will be much amused by the absurd walking advertisements, and edified by the soles of boots at the windows of the reading-rooms of the St. Nicholas and the New York Hotel; and besides all this you will make the acquaintance of Peppino.

For I do not imagine that you are of those who waste their time by blacking their own boots, but that you much prefer to patronize the poor Italian who for five cents will put so wonderful a polish upon your lower extremities. For see now, we must all live, in one way or another; and my poor countrymen have a right to exist, were it only by selling melons or by blacking boots.

Do you know Peppino? No? Then I will introduce you to him. Come with me to the corner of Prince Street, opposite the Metropolitan Hotel. On that corner stands

a boy about twelve years old, with a brown skin made yet browner by the sun, a head covered with thick, curly hair, a pug-nose, and a *je ne sais quoi* in his appearance which makes him look very droll as he stands there, with his blacking-box strapped across his chest. Peppino is not dirty. He wears a blue jacket with a sailor-collar, trousers rather short, indeed, but clean, and on his feet are slippers of yellow leather.

When Peppino cries out to you "Shine?" you will not be able to resist the fascination, and, like so many others who are passing him, will stop and confide your boots to him while he makes them shine like a mirror.

Peppino is an aristocrat in his own way, and has a ruling idea in life. Who has not? His ambition is to be able to possess, one of these days, by the aid of your boots, a swell-front in his native town, a little America in the heart of Southern Italy. If you will give me time, I will relate to you how I came to know Peppino, and will

tell you things that you do not hear every day.

This came to pass at that blessed time when I first came to America. At that epoch I was not precisely in intimate relation with the Manhattan Bank; but in three weeks of New York life I had experienced great fluctuations in my own special "Bourse," and in a relatively short space of time I had had my financial Waterloo.

Picture to yourself that I had come from Italy with five hundred francs in my pocket and with an idea, even many ideas, in my head: I believed that in America money ran like a river through the streets, and therefore it was not necessary to bring any, but simply to come and gather it up. With these ideas five hundred francs were more than a superfluity; and to say the truth, I got rid of them with an indifference worthy of a nabob.

For instance, I had been led to believe one could not be modestly lodged in New York for less than fifteen dollars a week; and in the matter of food there was noth-

ing to be thought of but the bill of fare at Delmonico's, or indeed Martinelli's *menu*. Naturally, therefore, I threw myself into the hospitable arms of Ernest Delmonico's *maître d'hôtel*, and of Paolo, the *aide-de-camp* of Martinelli. I was a little surprised to see seated at these tables only gentlemen in full dress and ladies in the most fashionable attire, and even said to myself: "I wonder where the working people live?" But I answered myself: "You stupid! they probably eat at an hour when you do not happen to be hungry."

As I went on my way, seeing all things as through a prism, and not knowing a word of English, having determined at all costs to discover America for myself, it occurred to me that in three weeks I had descended through all the semitones of the financial scale, and had learned three things: First, that I had been obliged to go from a lodging at fifteen dollars a week to one at ten, and then to one at five, and at last was not able to pay anything at all; second, that I had fallen from the height

of Delmonico's to the depths of an underground restaurant, where I paid twenty-five cents for my dinner, beer included; and third, that it had become almost impossible for me to have my boots blacked. The result was that at the end of three weeks I found myself possessed of the appetite of a wolf, that I had unblacked boots, and a quantity of manuscript with which I intended to civilize America.

Every morning I put these big rolls of paper in my pockets,—a political article on M. Gambetta, a criticism on M. Zola, a comedy in three acts, with *chansonnettes*, and the inevitable biography of poor old Garibaldi. Armed with these, I went to the "New York Herald" office and asked the janitor when Mr. Bennett, who was in Europe, would be likely to return, and to the "Sun," to know if perhaps Mr. Dana had finished his breakfast. Then I sought out the editors of the various departments, and emptied the treasures of my pockets upon their tables. It was true the brave fellows could not understand a word I said; but

they had travelled the same stormy road themselves, and could at least sympathize.

The following day I would return to find my precious things in the box devoted to rejected contributions, and attached to them this sacred legend: "This manuscript returned, with thanks." It was only after several of these excursions that I found out that I had given my political articles to the "sport" department, and my literary criticisms to the obituary notices.

It was during one of these peregrinations that I first saw Peppino. I had just issued from a grocer's shop, where I had been buying ten cents' worth of crackers and cheese, of which my breakfast for two mornings had been constituted. While I awaited the sale of my first article, to allow me to dream of some sort of dinner, as I was passing the Metropolitan Hotel a boy suddenly started from the wall, and dropping on his knees and calling in a high voice, "Shine! shine!" without giving me time for resistance, seized one

foot, and in a moment my right boot was blacked and polished.

"My boy —" I expostulated.

"I will do it very quickly, signorino," said the lad.

It was in vain to protest; my second boot was already in process of cleaning, and soon shone like its predecessor. At last my foot was free; but, alas! I was in bonds mentally. I truly believe that I turned pale. Do you guess why? No? Well, the truth was that I had passed through Rabelais' *mauvais quart d'heure* for the want of five cents. My entire property consisted in a bag of crackers in my hand and a biography of Garibaldi in my coat-pocket. I looked at the boy; he stared at me. Several of his customers went by, making a sign to him to black their boots; but he did not stir.

"Five cents!" he sighed at last.

"I have n't a single one!" I ejaculated with some difficulty.

"It is no matter at all; *non ja minti;* the Madonna be with you!" was his reply.

I took hold of his arm with a friendly grasp.

"What is your name?" I said.

"Peppino," touching his cap.

"Thank you, my Peppino; I shall come and see you again to-morrow."

"The Madonna be with you!" he said again, and I walked away with tears in my eyes, saying to myself: "Now I must make some money at any cost, in order to reward this boy for his honest trust in me."

Evidently the boy brought me luck, for on reaching my room I read in the paper that the Ministre de Justice had just died in Italy. In all haste I wrote an obituary on the great man, and took it to the "New York Herald." It was accepted; and better than that, they sent me immediately the money for it, which amounted to the enormous sum of seven dollars. Picture it! Seven dollars! It was indeed like manna in the desert to poor starving me. My first thought was to seek Peppino. He received me with the smile of an old acquaintance.

"I knew very well that you would come back," he said; and without more ado took possession again of my boots, and polished them as if I had been the best customer in the world. When he had finished, I slipped fifty cents into his hand; whereupon he began to search his pockets for the change, still on his knees. He found forty cents, and would have given them to me; but I told him to keep them. He looked at me with an air that seemed to say: "Don't you think me capable of blacking a pair of boots on credit without usury?"

"Keep the money, my boy," I said; "and if you would like it, come to me every morning at eight o'clock to black my boots."

"Indeed I will; but where shall I go?"

"No. 25, Ludlow Place."

"*Va bene!* all right; I shall be there."

II.

I SAW nothing of my Peppino the next morning, and I supposed that he had preferred some customer whose pay would be more certain than mine. I was a little disappointed; and scarcely conscious of the direction in which I went, strolled down town, and came upon Peppino at the corner of Prince Street, where he was busily brushing the boots of a colored man. He made me a hasty sign with his brush to wait, and worked away busily at the larger surface which required to be polished. This finished at last, he turned to me and said in rather an injured tone, pulling the strap of his box over his shoulder as he spoke, —

"I went to your house this morning, as I said I would; and after keeping me waiting a long quarter of an hour on the door-step, an old woman came, and I asked for you. Ah! signorino, she must be bad,

that old woman, for she was very, very cross to me, and if I had not run away, she would have called the police to put me off the steps; she said she would."

"What do you mean? She really sent you away?"

"*Proprio cosi*, exactly so," said the boy; and then, seeing that I looked sorry and mortified, added: "Never mind; if you want me, I will come again, I am not afraid."

"I believe you, Peppino; and you shall come again, and the old woman shall receive you properly, I promise you."

I wished to shake hands with him; he hesitated a little, and then with some confusion began to rub his hand on his trousers, trying to wipe away the stains that the blacking had left on his fingers.

"Well," I said, "are you not going to shake hands with me?"

"With you, a signore?" said he, opening his great black eyes; and then he reached out his hand and put it in mine with great satisfaction.

That afternoon when I returned home I went to the sitting-room of my landlady. This worthy woman, thin of person and cat-like of voice, was always installed in a small, dark apartment, furnished with black horsehair chairs and sofa, a marble-topped table, and a large Bible. She was very pious and very grim. When she saw me she asked in sharp tones, —

"What can I do for you, Mr. Fortuna?"

"Nothing, madam, except that I wish you would not prevent one of my countrymen from coming to see me."

"What do you mean by countrymen? The only person that has been here to see you was a dirty little Italian brigand. I don't want such people in my house."

"Madam," I replied, "Peppino is a compatriot of mine and an honest gentleman; and as I pay you for my lodging, I wish you to allow my friends to visit me in it. This boy wishes to gain an honest living; he comes to black my boots."

At this my landlady held up her hands in holy horror.

"To black your boots? I should think that it would be much better for you to black your own boots."

Now I had passed through many stages of poverty; I had breakfasted on crackers, and had gone without any dinner to speak of: but I own it had never entered my head to be the possessor of blacking-box and brushes. I had often put my boots outside my chamber-door, thinking that perhaps the servant-girl might take pity on them, but with no result; and they were indeed very rusty when I first made acquaintance with Peppino.

Not caring to discuss this point with her, however, I reiterated that I wished her to have Peppino let in whenever he came; and left her, she shutting her door with a malicious slam as I took my way upstairs.

From this time Peppino and I became the best of friends. His entrance into my room every morning was like a ray of warm sunlight from my dear native land, and I could see that he was really pleased

with the familiar friendliness with which I always treated him. He was very intelligent, and always respectful and polite, never coming in without knocking at the door and saying,

"Buon giorno, signore."

While he was at work he watched me as I wrote at my table, going quietly about the room on the tips of his toes, for fear of disturbing me. When my credit of forty cents was exhausted, and I wished to give him some money, he said in a timid voice,

"*Non fa niente*, if you have no change."

The boy understood my situation, and if he had dared to, would have offered to black my boots for nothing.

"But you must take it," I said, a little provoked.

So he pocketed the pennies without another word.

My affairs went on from day to day in about the same way. My landlady was always sour of aspect, bringing my bill, with a grim and suspicious look on her face, early every Saturday morning. Pep-

pino said nothing, but I had reason to think that his way to me was often interrupted by combats, more or less personal, with the aggressive woman. Once he said to me: "How can you live, signorino, in the house of that bad-tempered woman, you a signore?"

"'Signore!'" I repeated; "I live here because I am poor, and cannot find cheaper lodgings."

"But you, a signore!"

Peppino evidently thought that this word "signore" meant many things.

One day, when I was in a talkative mood, I asked him: "How much money do you make a day, my boy?"

"That depends, signore; sometimes I make a dollar and a quarter, sometimes only seventy-five cents. In the summer I have more work, but my winter customers pay me better; so it comes to about the same thing."

"And how much do you spend?"

"*Chi lo sa?* Who knows? Sometimes ten cents, sometimes twenty-five cents."

"Why, then you are a rich man! What do you do with all this money?"

"We send it home."

"We? Who is we?"

"Myself and my two brothers."

"And what do your brothers do for a living?"

"Oh! my brother Antonio is a first-class boot-black. He stands at the corner of Union Square and Broadway, and his price is fifteen cents. He is very smart, my brother; sometimes he makes as much as three dollars and ten cents a day. But he plays mora, and then he loses his money."

"And do you give your money to him?"

"No, not to him, but to my brother Filippo, il signore; he plays on the violin, he does, and dresses like a gentleman. He plays the violin on the Coney Island boats. It is to him that I give my money, and he sends it home to Italy by Signor Cantoni, who has the bank in Wall Street."

"How much does Filippo make?" I went on.

"Oh! a great deal. Sometimes four dollars a day."

"And where do you live?"

"We live all three together in a little room in Crosby Street, and we cook macaroni every Sunday." He added breathlessly: "Would you come and eat macaroni with us next Sunday?"

"Oh! I thank you, my child, but I think not."

"Ah, signore, you must say yes; I have already spoken of it to my brothers, and they want you so much to come."

This invitation seemed a little strange; but I would not have offended Peppino for the world, and I accepted it. The following Sunday he appeared, quite transfigured. He had put on a jacket of black cloth, black trousers, and a pair of laced shoes, much too large for his feet, but resplendently new. He had washed his face until it shone, and had a bright red-and-white handkerchief tied round his throat

for a cravat. When I saw him in this attire, with his blacking-box strapped round his shoulder, the whole get-up was so incongruous that I could not help smiling; at which the tears came into his eyes, and I hastened to assure him that I did not mean it in ridicule, but was he going to work in those fine clothes?

"Oh, no! it is *festa grande* to-day," he said; "and you are coming, are you not?"

"Yes, sir; but it is only half-past eight o'clock."

"It is true; but my brother has to go on the boat to-day to make music, and for that we must have our macaroni at about nine o'clock."

Upon this I jumped out of bed and was soon ready, and we set forth together.

The house where Peppino and his brothers lived was of dismal appearance, in the most crowded part of Crosby Street, where human lives and rubbish of every description seem to be thrown together pell-mell, in a heap. As we ascended the steps of the house, I found that I was really in the

midst of Southern Italy. Sitting on the ground were little children, dirty and ill-clothed; others rolled happily among the mud-puddles. Olive-skinned women were combing each other's long black hair; others, of the true Abruzzi type, wore bright petticoats, somewhat ragged, and scarlet *bustini*, according to the custom of their country. They had gold necklaces with pendant crosses, and long earrings, called *scioccagi*, which almost touched their shoulders. Old women were pulling over rags in baskets, while the men disposed themselves in various attitudes, enjoying the *dolce far niente*, smoking bad cigars and drinking worse beer. When they saw us, the women hastily caught up their children from the ground, and the men made way for us, saying, —

"*Ecco!* here comes the signore."

Peppino was quite triumphant, and laughed until his white teeth sparkled between his red lips. "Yes, indeed, it is the signore," he cried to all of them, and

tossed his cap high into the air and caught it again, as he showed me the way upstairs. Making our way with some difficulty through many hospitable people dispersed here and there on the stairways, who asked us cordially to have a drink of beer as we went by, we came at last to the top of the house and stopped before a door which seemed to have for all fastening a loop of cord, which passed through a hole made in the wood, and was caught inside. This door opened, and two young fellows appeared, upon which Peppino introduced us to each other as follows, —

"It is the signore."

The two brothers took me in with a comprehensive glance, from head to foot, and then cried both together: "Ben venuto!" "Welcome!" and gave me so cordial an American shake of the hand that my wrist was almost dislocated.

"Keep on your hat," said the musician.

"Thank you," I replied.

"And don't stand on ceremony," added

the vicious gambler at mora while he got a chair and put it for me in the very middle of the room, as if to put me in possession of the place. At the same time Filippo drew up a table, on which was served in a moment the traditional dish of macaroni, which was evidently all ready and waiting. At nine o'clock in the morning I confess that I was not enormously inclined to do much honor to the Neapolitan dainty; but it was pressed upon me with such cordiality that I found myself finishing two platefuls, and not finding it bad at all. After the macaroni came a course of candy and peanuts.

Peppino was radiant.

The room was poor, certainly, but very neat. There were two beds, one for the violinist, and the other occupied evidently by the two younger brothers. On these beds were bright-colored figured cotton quilts. Over the head of each bed was a print nailed to the wall with big black nails. One represented the Crucifixion, and the other the Madonna del Rosario.

In one corner was a large wooden chest, once white, but now yellowed by age and weather, wherein they kept all their effects; and four straw-seated chairs completed the furniture of the room. There was a wash-basin on a shelf; here also, leaning against the wall, were two bits of looking-glass. Red cotton curtains hung before the windows, and on one window-seat was a splendid red geranium in full bloom.

"You are lodged like princes here," said I to the three brothers.

"We are contented," said the violinist. "But this is nothing; we shall have a house down there."

"Down there? Where?"

"At Viggiano."

"Are you from Viggiano?" I asked.

"Certainly," replied Antonio; "we are going to have a first-rate house on Broadway."

I was puzzled. Viggiano — Broadway! I could not understand, and began to suspect that a very *petit vin de Sicile*, of which my hosts had drunk at breakfast,

had got into their brains or mine. I laughed, not knowing what else to do.

"I see," said Filippo calmly, "that you know nothing of Viggiano."

III.

"WELL, then," said Filippo, "would you like to have me tell you all about Viggiano?"

"Now, why should the signore care to know about Viggiano?" interposed Peppino, who feared that it would not interest me, and wished to be agreeable to me at any cost.

To reassure him, I declared that nothing would please me more than to hear what Filippo had to say.

"You must know, then," began he, "that our Viggiano is in Basilicata."

"Yes, I know."

"He knows," said Peppino in a stage whisper.

"And at Viggiano everybody plays on some instrument or other, — harp or vio-

lin. That comes by nature; no one teaches us that. One fine day some one went away from among us to seek his future and see the world, without knowing whither he went; and this some one, always wandering, found himself at last in America. Now, since this first some one returned to Viggiano with five thousand dollars in his pocket, emigration has not ceased for a moment. From father to son, for twenty-five years, it has been always the same story. One leaves one's house a little boy, a harp on the back or a violin under the arm; and always playing as one goes along the roadsides of Italy, one picks up sous. These sous have grown to be many by the time one reaches Genoa. Then it is easy to get a passage on board some ship going to America; and if the passage-money is not quite complete at starting, one makes it up by playing on board, and so gaining a little. That is the way we get here. Every month we go to Signor Cantoni's and take the money we have made, — some of us by playing,

some by blacking boots. When we have sixty dollars it is sent to the mayor of our village. He is one of us; he has been in America, and now he is a rich man."

"How much money does a man require, to be called a rich man?" I asked.

"Oh! with four thousand dollars you are very rich," answered Filippo.

"And what security do they give you for the money you send?"

"We ask none but a receipt, and with that we are perfectly content. With the money they buy for us a lot on Broadway. Broadway is the name of our great street, half a mile long! It was called so by one of our mayors, who had been chief boot-black in Broadway in New York for ten years. It is he who had the church built at his own expense. So you see," continued Filippo, lighting a pipe as he spoke, "that thirty years ago Viggiano was only a cluster of poor little cottages, whereas now every one who comes back from America speaks more English than Italian and has a house with a swell-front! Not fine

houses like the ones on Fifth Avenue, to be sure, but yet very nice, very nice — white plastered, with swell-fronts!"

Great emphasis on the swell-front. Peppino clapped his hands in applause, and Antonio puffed away at his cigar with an expression of supreme content, watching me the while to see the impression that all this made upon me. Surely I had never dreamed that there was this curious little reflection, as it were, of American life and manners among the mountains of Basilicata.

"Are you never afraid of losing your money?" I ventured to ask.

"Never," said Peppino. "Here we save every sou and live with the greatest economy; but there we have plenty, we want nothing. We have beautiful *festas*, and music never stops at all. My cousin Paolo has a room papered with New Year's cards that were picked up in the streets here and sent to him, and the *curé* has a trunk entirely covered with American stamps!"

"In about a year," added Filippo, "I shall go back to Viggiano and marry my cousin Filomena, who has been waiting for me these eight years. I have paid the schoolmaster to teach her to read; I have paid him a dollar a year."

"A fine salary for a schoolmaster!" I observed.

"Why he is very rich," said Antonio. "There are six hundred inhabitants at Viggiano, and he makes almost four hundred dollars a year. That is a very good income down there."

"You see," said Filippo, with a slightly superior air, "I am a violin-player, and well-dressed, because, going into the world as much as I do, that is necessary. But Peppino and Antonio only black boots, and of course they cannot dress like gentlemen. No one would give them any work if they knew they had money already. Here we are always poor, for all our money is for the *paese;* here we lay up comfort for our old age. If you only knew how beautiful it is at Viggiano, signore! They have

flowers there, and in the evening everybody sits and sings outside of his swell-front." These swell-fronts were evidently the mania of the place. He continued: "I went home last year, because my old father wanted to see me, and besides that he wanted me to promise not to be false to Filomena. Some gossip had written home a story that I was in love with an organ-grinder. She lives in the house just opposite here; but that is nothing. Things have changed a little at home. Nowadays the children go directly from Viggiano to America, without stopping to play by the roadsides in Italy, and there is always an older brother or cousin to receive them when they land at Castle Garden."

Antonio now proposed a game of mora, but Peppino reproved him with a severe aspect; and as Filippo was obliged to go to the Coney Island boat, we accompanied him to the foot of Twenty-second Street. That day I invited Peppino to dine with me, and after a little urging he accepted my invitation with great delight. We eat

our modest repast at a French restaurant in Houston Street, at the sign of "Le Grand Charlemagne."

"People like Antonio," said Peppino, with great gravity, "have a *café* and bar at Viggiano, where they can play mora; but Filippo says that if one is going to drink, it is better to drink at home than to patronize the keeper of that *café*, who had a bad reputation in New York for always gaining at mora. For myself, I should n't think of going there, — no, not once in six years." This with an air of reflection.

"That's right, my lad," I said, patting him on the shoulder.

I really almost envied Peppino, and went to sleep that night, my head full of swell-fronts and Broadways; and I blessed America, that makes of my poor countrymen so many good and industrious citizens.

My landlady's manner became so very unpleasant that I decided to change my lodging, and was obliged to take one so far from Prince Street, where Peppino stood at his work, that although the boy was most

anxious to come to me every morning, I persuaded him that he ought not to do a thing so much against his interest. He was quite unhappy; but I promised him that I would go to him twice a week, which I did. I managed, by a little timid advice, to induce him to take more care of his personal appearance, telling him that politeness and neatness should go hand in hand. He was very docile, and promised to take a bath every now and then, and scrupulously brushed his hair every morning. The poor little fellow did most willingly all that I asked him.

"Say, *maestro*," he said one day, "when I go back to Viggiano I shall wish so much to know how to read. How much shall I pay you to give me lessons?"

"Peppino," I answered, "I will teach you to read with much pleasure; but I could not think of taking any money. No, no."

"No? But this is business, signore, — no money, no lesson."

"Very well; we will see about it this summer some time," I said.

Just about that time I was called away to the West in haste. I wanted to say good-by to Peppino, and went to Prince Street for the purpose. He was not there. I was really disappointed, but left New York without seeing him. I was away longer than I had expected to be, and did not find myself in New York again until three months had passed. Almost the day after my return I was seized with an attack of low fever which kept me in the house for a fortnight. At last I recovered, and one of my first thoughts was to see my Peppino. For my first walk I sought him and found him. How glad he was to see me! He left a customer with a boot half finished, and taking me by the arm, led me a little aside. When we were alone, he told me how sadly the time had gone while he had not seen me, and that now I must let him come again to me every morning. So I gave him my address most willingly.

During the fortnight that I had been ill the small sum of money that I had made

in the West had flown away like summer flies, so that I was once more almost penniless. But I had learned how to make my way more easily with the editors of the daily papers, and I managed to get on somehow or other by my pen and a few lessons in Italian. One morning when Peppino came to my room I was still in bed, and not in the best possible humor; I fear I did not answer his *Buon giorno* in the pleasantest way. He went to work at my boots; but when he had finished he did not go, but after reaching the door once or twice, came back without opening it.

"Well," I cried, "what is the matter?"

"It is that you seem so sad, — are you ill?"

"Yes," I said, "I am ill."

"That is not true."

"But since I tell you so —" in spite of myself I was forced to smile at his air of assurance. The child still shook his head, and I could not help a sigh. While this little comedy was going on we heard a knock at the door.

"Come in," I said.

In rushed my landlady with a paper in her hand. Addressing herself to me, she said that I had allowed my bill to go over two days, that I used too much gas, that she must pay the gas-man, and that I must either give her the money or leave the room.

"But, madam, I am ill."

"I will give you twenty-four hours," she answered, and she went away.

This was the secret of my bad-humor, — I could not pay my lodging-bill.

When the woman had gone, Peppino came timidly to my bedside.

"*Sentite*, signore, listen!" said he. "Will you let me come back in ten minutes? I want to speak to you about something."

"Yes, Peppino, I shall not go out at all."

There must have been something quite terrible to the child in my face as I said these words, for he left me quite overcome. At the end of fifteen minutes he was back again. He had in his hand a red handkerchief. In this handkerchief there was some-

thing heavy and round of body, like a bottle tied at the neck. He approached the bed half roguishly, half ashamed, and in a tone as if he were imploring a great favor, cried, —

"You will do me this pleasure, won't you? You can pay me back, you know. Hold!" And at the same moment he untied the handkerchief, and out tumbled a quantity of pieces of money on my bed, — quarters of dollars, ten-cent and five-cent pieces, and pennies. All this made a large heap on the bed. A bank-teller would have been puzzled to guess how much money was there.

"And you wish," I stammered, "to lend!"

"To lend you this to pay the *padrona*. Come, now, do take it! I know I am only a poor boy, but I am of your own country, and I cannot see you insulted."

I was not strong, and the tears overflowed my eyes and rained down my cheeks. The poor boy was shocked, and I compelled myself to say, —

"So be it; I will take it. Count it."

"It is counted," he answered; "there are twenty-five dollars there. Do you really want it counted?"

This with an air which meant that of course he would count it if I insisted, but it would take a long, long time to do it, and his customers were waiting.

"Go," I said, "and come back to-morrow, and thank you."

"*Grazie a voi*," replied Peppino.

The little episode just related surprised and touched me at the same time. That which I had not been able to obtain by my most strenuous and desperate labor, that which men who professed to recognize merit and perseverance had not done for me, was offered to me by an obscure blacker of boots, by a child; and it made me reflect that into the hands of children is often put the gracious work of Providence. Already once before had Peppino brought me luck, at my first meeting with him, and my debt to him of five cents was followed by the sale of my first arti-

cle in a New York paper. And now again, as you will see, Peppino was to have a good influence upon my destiny.

I counted his money with great meanness, it must be confessed. There was not one cent more or less than the twenty-five dollars. I called my landlady, and as a kind of punishment for her harshness I paid her the five dollars for one week in pennies. As a slight mitigation the price of another week was added in two-cent pieces, and to cap the climax I gave her a quarter for the servant; and the servant and the landlady happening to be merged in the same individual, she went from my room with the air of having witnessed a miracle.

Fifteen dollars still remained, which I proposed to return to Peppino when he should come the next morning. He appeared in due season, with an aspect more than usually beaming. The postman had brought a letter for me, and he had taken it from him and bounded upstairs with it, knowing how anxious I always was for the

mail. As he opened my door, he held it above his head, that I might see it on the instant. It was a large envelope. My eyes sparkled when I saw on it the stamp of the "World." I opened it, and forthwith began a species of dance of joy around the room. Peppino looked at me astounded, his brush arrested in mid air on its way to my boot.

"Good news!" I cried.

"*Me ne consolo;* that delights me," he said.

"Are you busy to-day?" I asked.

"Have you an errand for me to do? I am here to serve you."

"Very well; I shall give you a dollar for the commission." Peppino was petrified.

"See, now," I said. "You won't understand about it, but that is no matter. You know that all these words that you see in writing on paper are called an article for a paper. Very well; a paper has bought these words. Do you understand?"

"Yes, signore."

"I shall give you a note to the editor of the paper, or rather his check, and he will give you the money, and you will bring it back to me immediately. No; on second thought, another way will be better. They will give you forty dollars. Take twenty-five, which belong to you, and put them into your pocket. The fifteen that will remain you will put in an envelope and come and put it here on this table, for I shall not be here probably when you get back. You understand?"

"Yes, certainly, signore."

I wrote a word to the clerk at the paying-desk of the "World" office, begging him to remit the amount of the check to the bearer, who was a person in whom I had perfect confidence. It was pleasant to see how proud Peppino was to be intrusted with this important mission. He told me again and again how quick he would be, and how particular in all details, and I bid him good-by until the following morning, and put

into his hand the dollar, to be earned by the business he was to do for me, which dollar was one of the twenty-five he had so generously lent me.

The boy went; I was very happy, — happy in my little success, and happy that I was able to show the child how entire my confidence was in him: in him who had shown so much in me. And I thought of his twenty-five dollars, gathered together cent by cent, and then thrown in a heap upon the bed of a sick man who was not able to earn his own living. And I built enough *châteaux* in Spain that day as I went about my affairs to fill a volume with the telling about them.

I returned to my room quite late in the evening, and naturally my first glance was towards the table upon which I expected to find the envelope that Peppino had left for me; but nothing was there. I searched, I turned over everything. Nothing! It was strange; but I said to myself that probably Peppino did not like to leave

the parcel on my table, and had therefore given it to the landlady to keep for me. It was so late that she was doubtless in bed, and it would be cruel to wake her. I would wait, and in the morning I should know all about it. And I went quietly to sleep, and dreamed that I had been offered the head of the dramatic department of the "World." I waked early. It was Sunday. My first thought was to buy a copy of the "World." There was my article, occupying three columns, and looking so very well! It was in a humorous vein, and they had really paid me royally for it. I read it over, and confessed to myself I was very proud of it.

At eight o'clock my landlady knocked at my door. "Ah," thought I, "she is coming to bring my envelope!"

"Have you the 'World,' Mr. Fortuna," said the woman, "and would you lend it to me?"

"Certainly, Mrs. Woodmilken; and with all the more pleasure that you will be able

to read my article, of three columns, Mrs. Woodmilken."

"Indeed!" she muttered.

Meantime I waited for my money; but not a word.

"By the by, madam," I said, "if you would be so good as to give me my envelope —"

"What envelope?" she asked.

"Why, you know — Peppino, did he not leave something with you for me?"

"Absolutely nothing," croaked the bird of ill omen; and she went away evidently glad to see that I was troubled a little by something about the despised Italian boy.

"Oh, well!" I said to myself, "Peppino will soon be here, and then all will be explained." Nine o'clock struck, and then ten, and so time went on until noon. Then I began to be restless, and went out, walking to the corner where Peppino always was. No Peppino. Then I went to Union Square, where Antonio ought to be. Not the shadow of Antonio. This began to be decidedly strange. At three

o'clock I knocked at the door of the house in Crosby Street. The door was hermetically sealed. By this time I was seriously anxious. The next day the same search, with the same result. I went to the "World" office. The check had been paid in bills and given to the bearer who brought my letter. What was I to think? I went back to the house where Peppino lodged, and asked the neighbors if they knew anything of him. They had not seen the boy for two days. Antonio had gone to Chicago some time before, and Filippo also was away, travelling with a troupe of Spanish students.

Then I was at the end of my resources, and had to make up my mind, most sorrowfully, that the boy had either been assassinated perhaps, or at all events my money — ah, no! It was horrible to suspect even for a moment the boy, who was honor itself. Nevertheless, I must confess that the idea came to me that perhaps poor Peppino had lost the money and had hidden away in the fear of confessing it.

Two days went by; three; a whole week. Then I put on mourning for my money as lost, and tried to fall back on whatever scepticism I possessed on the subject of Italian boys.

One evening, in loafing about the streets, I found myself in front of the yard of the Bellevue Hospital, and in passing the gate I heard a voice calling, "Signore, signore." I turned, and what did I see? Peppino, face to face with me. A torrent of questions poured out of my mouth before I could pay attention to anything. Then as he came nearer to me I saw that he was lame in his right leg. I looked more attentively at him. He was pale, frightfully pale.

"But what is the matter?" I asked. "What are you doing here?"

"It is the hospital here," he answered. And he told me how on the very day he went to the "World" office for me he had been run over by a heavy cart, how he had been picked up and carried to the hospital in a fainting condition, and how no one

had been able to understand what he said when he revived.

"But you did wrong not to send for me," I said; "you knew so well that I was your friend."

"Yes," answered the child hesitatingly, "but — "

"But — "

"I did not know your name, signore."

It was true. How much these simple words meant to me! He did not even know my name, and he had done so much for me. I learned afterwards that he had tried to tell them where I lived; but as he could give no name, and his English was worse than poor, they did nothing about it.

"And the money that you got for me that day, my poor child, of course it was lost when you fell in the street?"

"Not at all," he said. "I never lose money; I never lost a cent of it. I put it, you know, in a book on the table, for fear that the bad, cross landlady would see it. I don't like to have business with her."

"The book? On the table? Ah, I see! You are much better, are you not? Would you like to come away with me? You shall be well taken care of. I will speak to the doctor here about it."

"*Fate come volete.* Do as you please, signore."

I went to the office of the hospital, and was allowed to claim the boy and take him away. I called a hack and put him carefully in it and carried him home. He was still quite lame, although no bones had been broken. He was able to get upstairs with the assistance of the hack-driver and myself; but when he reached the door of my room he refused all aid, and hopping on one foot, scrambled as quickly as he could to my writing-table, and resting the lame leg on a chair, began to turn over all my books. At last, at the very bottom of all, he found an old "Ollendorf," and took possession of it with great joy. He opened it, took an envelope out from between the leaves, and waved it in the air.

"*Ecco!*" he cried, his eyes full of de-

light. "Here is the money! I hope that you never had a doubt of me?"

I embraced him with all my heart, and assured him that I could never think any ill of him.

Will you believe it, my reader? the poor boy had not dared to open the envelope, as I had given him full authority to do. His own money was there, as well as mine, and Ollendorf had taken the best care of our little fortune.

Peppino remained with me a week, sleeping on my sofa and being cared for by a good doctor who would not accept any remuneration for his frequent visits. More than that, when the child was able to work again, and had taken his old stand at the corner of Prince Street, the doctor became one of his regular customers, and never failed to shake hands with him and give him ten cents every time he blacked his boots.

Peppino was very proud of his aristocratic friends, and always declared that it was to me that he owed everything. But,

on the contrary, I considered that all the luck was on my side in having met that rare thing in this world, — a good and honest heart.

And let me beg of you, my readers, — if, indeed, you are of the masculine gender, — never to go by the corner of Prince Street without stopping to have your boots blacked by Peppino.

Peppino is modest, and I cannot give him greater pleasure than by putting my own obscure name in the shadow, as it were, of his great honesty.

ONLY A DOG.

ONLY A DOG.

ANYBODY who happened, several years ago, to visit pier No. — on the North River, whence sail the steamers of one of the most popular and best patronized ocean steamship companies, must have known "Jack." Jack was a celebrity of the place, and, unlike other celebrities, enjoyed a vast popularity among the sailors, 'longshoremen, custom-house officers, and other water-side characters.

If a stranger came on the pier and noticed the big black dog curled up in a corner at the extreme end of the pier, he was sure to meet with somebody who could tell him that that dog was called

"Jack," and that there was a story about him well known all around the place.

The dog had come there with his master on a departure day. In the bustle and confusion he had lost sight of the latter, who did not seem to care a great deal about him. The poor brute ran about the pier whining and crying, with haggard eyes and panting breath, until the last bell sounded, the plank was drawn in, and the ship glided off through the still waters of the river. Then a frenzy of despair seemed to seize the dog. Standing on the very extremity of the pier, he broke out into a dismal howl which did not cease until the last wreath of smoke from the steamer had disappeared on the horizon beyond the Narrows. Then he lay down, and all attempts to drive him off the pier proved vain. He was a big fellow, of a queer, mixed breed, — something between a Newfoundland and a Danish dog, — and he had an uncomfortable way of showing his teeth when anybody tried to drive him away. At first the people on the pier wanted to

shoot him; but on after thoughts they resolved to let him stay where he was, hoping he would make a good watch-dog.

For many a day and night he remained lying there at the same place whence he had watched the departure of the steamer. At night he did not sleep, but howled dismally. The old night watchman on the pier took pity on him, and supposing he was hungry, brought him the remnants of his own supper and a pail of water. The dog wagged his tail and licked the old man's hands gratefully, but did not touch the food. He lay there, his eyes riveted on the spot where the ship had disappeared, trembling from head to foot, moaning miserably.

Thus the days passed on. Jack had dwindled almost to a skeleton. Nearly ten days elapsed before he began to eat, but nothing could induce him to leave the pier. The old watchman, to whom he seemed to have taken a fancy, tried to coax him to his home; but in vain. The dog followed him as far as the street, but there invariably left him, with a farewell

wag of his bushy tail, as if he wanted to say: "I am sensible of your kindness, good man, but you are not my master; duty before all!"

And he trotted back, whining in a melancholy undertone. Nothing could induce him to leave the post of observation he had selected, — an open space at the extremity of the pier. There he lay day after day, night after night, in the scorching August sun and through the dreary storms of winter. When the sea-wind howled, throwing up huge waves against the massive structure of the pier, the spray covering the woodwork with a sheet of ice; when all around seemed deserted and dead; when even old Pat, the night watchman, crept into his cabin and shivered under his old coat, — Jack stuck to his post. Trembling from head to foot, he stood on the brink of the pier howling dismally into the storm, — a black silhouette against the black wintry sky. He was evidently perfectly aware of the fact that his master had left on board a ship, for on arrival

days a great change seemed to come over poor Jack. As soon as he saw the great bulk of a vessel looming over the pier, a feverish agitation seized him. With eyes glowing and ears erect, he ran to and fro, panting breathlessly. While the ponderous vessel was being slowly warped in alongside the pier a breathless, devouring impatience racked the poor dog's heart, for on seeing him thus, what hopeless sceptic could have doubted that he had a heart?

Sometimes, with an impatient yelp, he sprang all fours on a large post which stood out of the water about a yard distant from the pier itself; there he evidently thought he was nearer to the ship and to his master. When at last the gangway was lowered, his first impulse was to run on board. But driven away by the deck-hands, he remained on the pier scrutinizing with eager, blood-shot eyes every passenger. Sometimes when some figure, presenting from a distance a vague resemblance to his master, struck his view, he rushed forward with a joyful bark; then,

convinced of his mistake, he stopped short and turned back despondingly until some other man attracted his attention. Thus he waited until the last passenger had landed. When he perceived that all hope for this time was in vain, he returned to his customary post, rolled himself up in a corner, and — I was going to say, "cried;" for never did I see in a dog's eyes such an expression of utter misery and despair.

Many a time I was a witness of this scene, and it never failed to make on me a deep impression. Poor humanity, I thought! We are so proud of being the kings of the earth, we deem ourselves in matters of intellect and feeling to be so immeasurably higher than all the rest of the live creation, that we repulse as an offence the very idea of a comparison between us and other animals. And yet here is that dog living for months and months wrapped up in one feeling of attachment to his master — to a master who seemingly did not even care much for him; for how else could he have thus heedlessly left him behind? —

to a master of whom he could expect neither food, nor a gentle word, nor a caress. And then I thought how many mothers had gone by that same ship, leaving their sons and daughters behind; how many wives and husbands had been torn from one another; how many lovers had drowned their parting kiss in a flood of tears, vowing to each other eternal love! Where now were all these sons, husbands, and lovers? The great ocean of life had dragged them down into its never-resting whirlpool; and battling with its waves, they had doubtless acquired, long ago, new habits, new forms of existence. New purposes and interests had engrossed all their energies, absorbing the best and the noblest part of their heart and mind, and only at rare intervals, perhaps in the dead of night, did the old feeling haunt their heart's memory, like the shadow of a long-forgotten strain, like the image of a once dear face seen in a glass darkly!

Poor Jack, however, was not destined to remain friendless. Some two months after

his master's departure he found a friend who soon became devotedly attached to him. His name was Jimmy, and he was as forlorn and lonely creature as Jack himself, with the slight difference that Jimmy was a street-boy, and Jack a dog. Their destinies and mode of life hardly differed, however.

As Jack had probably first beheld the light of day on some heap of refuse in a backyard, so did Jimmy find himself once sprawling in the mud in a dark and dingy street of our brilliant metropolis. There was a material difference, however, between these children of Nature. While Jack had until then always found a master who fed and shielded him from cold and rain, Jimmy could boast of no such thing. And this was natural too, and could not have been otherwise, for Jack, though not of full breed, still had a price, and was worth some money; but who would have ever thought of giving a cent for Jimmy? The little chap grew up, and did not die of hunger, — not for want of opportunities for

doing so, however, but simply because human nature is tough, exceedingly tough, and requires a good deal of wear and tear before it gives up the game. When he was five years old somebody put an evening newspaper into his tiny dirty hand and bade him cry out its title in the streets, —which he did in a particularly screeching voice for four years without intermission, flying off and on car-platforms with monkey-like agility, clinging occasionally with a desperate grip to the rear of a bobtail car, and plunging its driver into a frenzy of impotent rage; in short, fulfilling in every particular the well-known type of the New York street-arab.

One frosty night an ill-humored car-conductor pushed him off the platform a little unceremoniously, as he had been pushed off hundreds of times before. But on this particular night the pavement was very slippery. Jimmy lost his balance and fell on the opposite track just as a car was passing. A faint shriek, the car stopped, and a few moments later the

little senseless and motionless body was extricated from under the wheels, looking like a bundle of dirty rags in the arms of a policeman who took charge of him.

Even then, however, Jimmy was not dead. The doctors in the hospital cut off one of his legs, and were very good to him during all the long, weary months he lay in bed. And when he was well and strong again, they had a pair of crutches made for him and taught him how to use them, and then said "good-by" to him. He was once more in the streets. But no more jumping on car-platforms now. Timidly, scarcely daring to venture out of the gates of the hospital, he picked his way with his crutches, stumbling at every step. When fairly out in the street he found his condition still more insupportable. Small boys in possession of both their legs, inspired by that innate good nature peculiar to the gentle dawn of human life, taunted and quizzed him and threw mud at him. The din and confusion of the great city bewil-

dered and dazed him. He grew faint, and was about to fall on the sidewalk when a rough hand seized him by the collar, lifted him up so that both crutches fell to the ground, and two powerful arms carried him away with the crutches — whither he knew not and cared not. He heard a gruff voice speaking to him as in a dream, and then fell asleep. He awoke in a small, dark bar-room of the river-side, haunted exclusively by sailors and 'longshoremen. Several burly, sun-burned fellows were standing apparently in earnest consultation around the table on which Jimmy lay.

"Say, little chap," said one of the group on seeing Jimmy open his eyes, "can you sing a song?"

"Guess I can!" was the prompt answer.

"Then it is all right!" returned the other.

And it was "all right." Jimmy remained there; and when of an evening a merry company met in the little bar-room, he was called forth to give a song, which he did, beating the measure with

his crutches. This proved an excellent business for the saloon-keeper; the tiny songster on crutches was "a new feature," and drew great and enthusiastic audiences.

Thus it was that Jimmy and Jack met. The former hung daily about the pier on which the latter bemoaned his lost master, and the two outcasts soon became close friends. It was touching to see with what almost fatherly care the big dog surrounded the poor little cripple. For him he even consented to leave the pier for a short time, and invariably accompanied him to the door of the bar-room. And woe to the urchin who dared to tease or laugh at Jimmy! Jack had a peculiar snarl, which promptly silenced all insolence. Often it happened that in fine weather Jimmy lay all day on the pier leaning against Jack's broad shoulder, pulling his ears, singing and speaking to him without interruption. Then the dog's face took a proud, dignified look. He lay there without moving, not to disturb his little

friend, only occasionally turning his head towards the little face close by and licking it all over with his broad tongue. And thus both lived on together. The friendless boy in a city with over a million of his fellow-creatures had found a dog which had befriended him.

On coming one morning as usual to the pier, Jimmy found Jack lying on his side stiff and dead; somebody had poisoned the dog over night. The poor cripple broke out into a flood of tears and lay down sobbing on the corpse of his only friend. Old Pat, who was passing that way, stopped to look at the group, and said in a severe voice, —

"Cheer up, now, lad! For shame; 't is but a dog after all!"

BEPPO.

BEPPO.

THEY called him Beppo, and her Rita. And seldom, indeed, did it happen that the one was mentioned without the other; for if ever there were bosom friends in the world, Beppo and Rita were such.

Who were their parents? Who can say? They themselves were least able to give a satisfactory answer to this question. All they could remember was that they had found themselves one day side by side basking in the sun and scrambling about among the sands and pebbles of the shore at Naples, that since that day that shore had become their home, and that they had always remained together. Thrice a day Zio Antonio (Uncle Antonio) took them

to his hut and gave them macaroni and *frutti di mare*. When night came, if Rita felt chilly, they knocked at Antonio's door and huddled together among his nets and fishing-tackle. But mostly they remained lying on the sand, looking at the bright stars overhead, chattering and laughing until the great sea lulled its children to sleep with its deep, soft murmur.

Beppo was somewhat older than Rita, and she looked up to him as to her natural and powerful protector. He was proudly conscious of this, and would have sprung into a lion's jaws to shield her from harm.

So they grew up, like all that is alive in Nature grows up in those blessed climes, — children of the rich, burning soil on which they lay, of the blue sea which like a mother sang them to sleep.

Beppo was about fourteen, and Rita perhaps two years younger, when Zio Antonio announced to them that in future they had no more macaroni to expect from him, for he was going away — far, far away — to a land called America. Things looked bad

in Naples, he said, *molta gente e poco danaro* (many people and little money); and so he preferred work in foreign lands to starvation at home.

The poor children cried bitterly in taking leave of the old man. He was the only human being who had ever cared for them, and now they were all alone in the world. It was not for his macaroni alone that they cried; as long as there was a fisherman on the shore they had no fear of hunger. But the macaroni is, after all, not everything in life, even to a Neapolitan *lazzarone*. After Zio Antonio had left them, Beppo grew daily more restless and thoughtful. He would sit for hours in the sand, his dark, sparkling eyes fixed with a longing look on the blue space of open sea between Capri and Ischia; and when Rita crept up to him, and, nestling on his lap, asked what he thought about, he answered: "Zio Antonio and that foreign land he has gone to."

One day, as they were thus sitting together, a man dressed like a sailor

approached them, and, tapping Beppo on the shoulder, said, —

"Cheer up, my lad; I have good news for you from Zio Antonio. I have seen the old man on the other side; he is doing very well, and is fast becoming rich. Would you like to go to him? That ship, the captain of which is a friend of mine, starts to-morrow. He will give you a free passage for Antonio's sake."

Beppo sprang up in delight.

"Of course we will go," he exclaimed; "won't we, Rita?"

"As you will, Beppo," she answered, simply.

And the pair started, hand in hand, preceded by the sailor. The same night they were brought on board the ship, where the captain, a burly, coarse-looking, red-haired fellow, met them.

"Hallo, Domenico," he cried, "are you bringing me some more? We are pretty full already."

"Only two more," answered the man. "Squeeze them up a bit."

Then the captain and the man who brought the children drew aside and held a whispered conference. Some money passed from hand to hand, and then the sailor jumped into his boat and rowed back to the shore.

"What are you staring at?" cried the captain to the children, who stood on deck side by side, bewildered, amazed by all they had seen and heard. "Go down and sleep." Saying which, he seized them roughly by the shoulder and pushed them down a steep ladder into an utterly dark and narrow hole. Groping their way through the darkness, the children stumbled at each step they made on prostrate human forms. Cries and groans arose, and chilled their hearts with nameless terror. Beppo, with Rita half fainting in his arms, rushed back to the ladder; but it had already been drawn up. He screamed aloud; nobody answered him. He shook his fists and stamped on the floor in impotent rage; all in vain. They were locked up, buried alive. With difficulty

Beppo succeeded in finding an empty space on the floor. He took Rita in his arms, and, pressed closely against each other, both children cried themselves to sleep.

When they awoke, the broad daylight streamed in through the hatchway. In the narrow and close space forming a part of the steerage a dozen or more ragged children of all ages, from ten to sixteen, were crowded together, lying on the bare floor, with no other bedding than their own miserable rags. One by one the poor wretches awoke, crying bitterly. The ship had heaved her anchor during the night and had already gained the open sea.

"What does this mean? What is going to become of us?" asked Beppo of his neighbor, a little chap of scarcely ten years of age, who cried as if his heart would break.

"We are sold," cried the little one, sobbing, "sold to wild people over the seas, who will roast us and eat us."

The whole passage, which lasted nearly two months, was an uninterrupted series of suffering for the children. Not one soul on board cared for them in any way. Their food was brought to them twice a day in a trough, and consisted for the most part of sea-biscuit soaked in water. Most of the children dwindled to skeletons before they reached New York. Two of them died, and the corpses were thrown overboard without further ceremony.

But of all these hardships and sufferings Beppo felt little; his attention was too intensely absorbed by the care he had to bestow on poor Rita, who was sick nearly the whole time. The lad nursed her with a touching, untiring devotion; and when at length he heard that New York was in sight, his heart leaped with joy. He forgot all the uncertainty of their future doom in the joy of the one feeling that Rita would feel well again.

The next day after the ship had come to anchor in the North River, two uncommonly mean and brutal looking Italians

came on board, and were received by the captain with unusual honors. After indulging in a copious libation in the captain's cabin, the three worthies proceeded on deck and ordered the children to be brought out. The little ones flocked out, shivering in the chilly atmosphere of a November morning. Every one of them was minutely scrutinized by both visitors. Half of the party remained on board; the rest, five in number, among them Rita and Beppo, were packed into the boat and brought on shore. On landing, the *padroni* separated,—the one taking, with three children, an easterly direction, and the other driving Beppo and Rita before him like a yoke of oxen in the direction of Baxter Street.

While walking, the Italian explained to Beppo that his name was Matteo, and that they were going to live together.

"And where is Zio Antonio?" asked the lad in despair.

"What do I know about your Zio Antonio?" rejoined the *padrone* gruffly.

"You have no business to know anybody but me."

They walked on in silence. With each step through the busy, roaring streets the poor children became more frightened and bewildered by the bustle which surrounded them. A feeling of utter despair and helplessness seized Beppo as he became conscious of the impossibility of finding Zio Antonio amid the waves of this human ocean.

"Here we are," said Matteo, stopping in the doorway of one of the loftiest and most dingy tenement-houses in Baxter Street; "follow me." He stepped into the dark hall. The children followed, trembling with an indefinable horror. The walls of the hall were damp and clammy, the air foul with stenches and emanations of all kinds. The poor *lazzaroni*, used to the balmy, invigorating breezes of the Mediterranean, felt nearly choked in this atmosphere. At the end of a long corridor they descended a few steps into what seemed to be an entirely dark cellar.

Matteo opened a door in a narrow, badly lighted basement-room, in which, besides a rough bedstead in the corner, they could distinguish only a great heap of nondescript rags, peanuts, egg-shells, and rubbish of every kind. In the middle of the room there stood a small decapitated iron stove, which had evidently not yet been used during that season, for the air in the room was damp and cold.

"There is your bed," said Matteo, pointing to a heap of rags in the corner. "There is always enough of that rubbish about for you to lie on. Now come along; I will show you your business."

"But Rita cannot walk," exclaimed Beppo indignantly. "She has been sick all the way. Give her something to eat before going."

"Time enough for that," rejoined Matteo, grinning. "Well, the girl may remain at home for this once." Matteo led the boy through a labyrinth of narrow streets to one of the busiest and noisiest corners of that noisy neighborhood. There the

worthy *padrone* possessed a thriving peanut-stand, which he intended to trust to Beppo, himself desiring to embrace a new and more lucrative career.

From that day a weary, miserable life began for the poor children. It was not the wretched food and cruel treatment on the part of Matteo which pained them the most; it was first of all the dreadful house, the abominable underground hole in which they lived, the feeling of dependence, almost of slavery, which was hard to bear for these children of Nature. Many a sleepless night did they spend sitting on their heap of rags and talking in a whisper about Santa Lucia and the nights on the coast and Zio Antonio.

Sometimes Rita accompanied Beppo to his peanut-stand. But mostly she remained at home, or was sent out by Matteo to sell evening papers, the names of which he had taught her. One bitter cold night, as Beppo returned home a little earlier than usual, he heard on approaching the door of their room the

angry voice of Matteo swearing and scolding, while Rita cried and moaned in an agony of pain. Beppo rushed into the room and saw Matteo holding the girl by the hair with one hand, while with the other he lashed her naked back with a whip. Beside himself with rage, Beppo sprang at Matteo's throat and clung to it with such a firm grip that the man was obliged to release poor Rita. Of course he turned all his fury against the boy. He whipped him until the blood sprang out of his scars; then, opening the door, he threw the senseless body of the lad out into the inner yard of the house. Rita ran after him, and Matteo locked both out, saying, —

"Freeze there all night, you curs!"

The cold air revived Beppo very soon. On recovering his senses, his first question was after Rita. She was kneeling by his side, crying bitterly.

"Why has the rascal whipped you?" he asked.

"He wanted to teach me how to draw

a handkerchief out of his pocket so that he should not feel it; and I could not, and then he beat me," answered the girl, sobbing.

Beppo said nothing; but he clenched his fists, and his eyes flashed like those of a wild beast. Rita was shivering with cold. The boy got up and rapped at Matteo's window. An oath and an order to keep quiet was all the answer he could get. With every hour the night became colder. An icy wind came sweeping over the city, and, descending into the deep court-yard in Baxter Street, kept whirling and whirling around, chilling the poor Italian children to their very hearts. Beppo took off his coat and waistcoat to keep Rita as warm as possible, and feeling his limbs stiffening in the frost, leaned against the door and drew the girl close to his bosom. Thus they lay as they had so often lain, locked in a close embrace on the sand of their native coast. Sleep, the great friend of childhood, for whom there are no rich and no poor, who with equal love and mercy extends his

soothing hand over the palace and the hut, closed their eyelids with a gentle touch, and sent his sunniest dreams to soothe and to cheer them. A smile of happiness hovered about their pale faces; they saw once more before them the Bay of Naples glittering in the rays of their native sun, they felt the warm breeze caressing their cheeks. The smile on their lips grew brighter and happier.

"Beppo!" whispered the girl.

He heard her in his sleep, and drew her still closer to him.

And then all was still. The smiling friend of childhood had fled, and in his place a graver angel looked down upon the poor sleeping waifs and took them in his arms. The sunshine grew brighter and brighter in their dreams, the breeze warmer and balmier, their smile more radiant. Thus they lay through all that long cold night. And when the morning came at last, and all that giant house awoke to its day's misery and crime, the two lifeless forms were found lying in

close embrace, with the same blissful smile illumining their faces.

What became of Matteo? Nothing, of course. He easily proved that he had always been a "respectable" man, that he knew nothing about what had become of the children on that night, and that by "honest work" he had collected a few paltry dollars, of which he would readily give a share to any friends who would help him out of that scrape. It is hardly necessary to add that he found such friends easily.

THE "HERR BARON."

THE "HERR BARON."

A CITY like New York may well be termed the camera-obscura of the world.

As on the white "reflecting board" of a dark chamber all the features of the surrounding landscape appear in accurate though diminished shapes, so do the varied elements of the population crowded together on the narrow slip of land between the East and the North rivers present a vivid and faithful picture of all nations, customs, and positions in life from all parts of the world. These infinitely varied elements of humanity whose representatives crowd our streets are pressed together in this narrow city without mingling

with one another, each retaining its own peculiarities, tastes, and interests. As in our hotels — those immense caravansaries which are in themselves an emblem of the life in our metropolis — guests live weeks and months side by side without caring even to ask who their neighbors are, so the nationalities constituting the population of the city live side by side, and yet apart.

Each nationality forming a part of our heterogeneous population represents a little world by itself, obeying its own social laws and customs, and jealously maintaining all its peculiarities. Of these nationalities by far the most numerous, best organized, and most firmly combined by common interests, recollections, tastes, and ways of life, is the German. Statistics prove New York to be the third of the great German cities of the world; and as everybody knows, there are whole districts in the city in which a knowledge of the German language is much more necessary than of the English. The characteristic feature of these districts

is undoubtedly the beer "saloons," which are as the stars in heaven. These establishments scarcely ought to be designated by a name which in France is associated with remembrances of powdered wigs, hoops, and Madame de Sévigné, while in America it is suggestive of cocktails, stale tobacco-smoke, and spittoons. On entering one of the popular German beer-houses you immediately become aware of the fact that you are in a *wirthschaft*, and not in a saloon. The mild and soothing spirit of lager reigns here paramount, and its influence is seen and felt everywhere. The bar is nearly deserted; no row of lean, shrewd-looking, and loud-talking gentlemen is to be seen treating themselves all round to mysterious multicolored chemicals served in glasses as "mixed drinks." All the guests here are seated at round tables, for the most part in company with their families, with large glasses of the foaming beverage before them, which are filled and refilled incessantly; clouds of tobacco-smoke from pipes and cigars hang

motionless in the air; the conversation flows slowly on in a quiet, somewhat drawling tone; peace and repose, a rather heavy but solid and carefully balanced sort of enjoyment, pervade the atmosphere of the place. The German *wirthschaft* is not only a place devoted to the sale and absorption of liquors; it is more than that: it is a national institution, to uphold which, as for instance in Munich, many a riot has already been set afoot.

One night in passing through one of the quiet streets which run from Second to Third Avenue, and which some ten years ago still enjoyed the reputation of being up town, one particular *wirthschaft*, which I had not happened to notice before, attracted my attention from its peculiarly snug look. The narrow entrance was half concealed by the thick foliage of a creeping vine, from behind which a lantern, with the inscription, "H. Gorr — Wirthschaft," was barely visible. A small white sign above the door exhibited the word "Sommergarten." From inside a female

voice was heard singing an old German song, accompanied by a piano. Neither the singer nor the instrument seemed to be very much out of tune.

All this had a promising look, so I stepped into the establishment. The bar-room and the restaurant were deserted. An open door led out into the back yard, which had been converted into a summer garden, or rather into a bower of ivy and other creepers. Every available place in the "garden" was filled with small round tables, and every chair at these tables seemed at present to have already its occupant. On my entering, however, a fleet-footed waiter came flying towards me and directed me to a small table, situated behind the piano, which had hitherto passed unobserved by the other guests.

I sat down, and was just about to give my order, when the meagre form of the waiter who had welcomed me was suddenly thrust aside by a superior force, and in his stead appeared a portly, solemn-looking man, clad with the most correct

and irreproachable elegance, dress-coat, white waistcoat, white necktie, a napkin wound round his right hand, — in a word, a model of a waiter such as any first-class *café*, from Delmonico's to Bignon's, might have been proud of.

"You can go, Franz," this majestic man said to the other waiter in a mellow, sonorous voice; "I will serve this gentleman myself."

The combination of condescending civility and self-importance he contrived to throw into this one word "myself" was overwhelming. In the presence of this majestic official my original intention of ordering modestly "one lager" melted away like wax. I felt it would be almost a sacrilege to ask for so little of so great a being, — it would be like asking Jupiter for one of his thunderbolts to light a cigarette! I muttered bashfully, "A pint bottle of Rhine wine, if you please." The great man bowed and moved away as majestically as he had come. He had scarcely disappeared within the restaurant, when a

strange half-consciousness crept upon me of having seen him somewhere before in very different circumstances, where and when it was impossible for me to recollect. Somehow or other, by a mysterious association of ideas, pictures of a time long past, of better and merrier days, arose in my memory. I saw again the Boulevards of Paris, with all their bustle at the hour when the theatres close. I felt once more about me that atmosphere of feverish excitement, of restless life, which surrounds the great Babylon of Europe. Had I seen that man at some *café* in Paris? No, it was not that. I could not have remembered for five long and eventful years such a trifling circumstance.

All of a sudden a name flashed upon me. Waldheim — Count von Waldheim — was the man this waiter reminded me of, and to whom he bore a most striking resemblance. Poor Waldheim, he was one of the maddest *viveurs* of Paris! As open-handed and generous as he was reckless, always in good spirits, he was the univer-

sal favorite of that *tout Paris* whose centre is the Boulevard des Italiens.

How well I remember the last supper the poor fellow gave us in the corner-room of the Café Anglais! There were not more than a dozen of us, — three or four ladies in the number, who by virtue of their beauty and of their diamonds were the leading "stars" in that strange hemisphere. I do believe that was the merriest night I ever passed in my life. A sort of frenzy of childish light-heartedness seemed to have seized on all the guests at that "funeral banquet," as Waldheim called it. So uproarious were we in our merriment that about three o'clock in the morning a *sergent de ville* sent up one of the waiters to request us either to shut the window or to make less noise, as we were disturbing the neighborhood. At daybreak Waldheim sprang up from his seat, filled his glass for the last time, and opening the balcony door, pointed to the Boulevards stretching quiet and deserted at our feet in the dim gray light of dawn.

"My last toast, ladies and gentlemen," he exclaimed, "is to this great living monster of Paris, which has devoured me and so many others! For thee, in thine enchanting embrace, I have lost all I possessed in the world. A beggar now, I bid thee farewell! *Moriturus, Cæsar, te saluto!*"

He emptied his glass and threw it out of the window on the pavement below. Then he took leave of all of us, making us promise not to follow him and not to search for him during at least three days, and was about to quit the room, when Valentine Ghemar, one of the ladies present, a well-known operetta-singer of the time, sprang up, and flinging her arms impetuously around Waldheim's neck, exclaimed, —

"You are a man, a brave man, and I love you! Wherever you go, let me go with you!"

"My dear little Valentine," answered Waldheim with a sad smile, "no romance, if you please! The times of love in a cottage are passed. Here in Paris, if

the cottage took the shape of a little hotel in the Champs Elysées, it might be all very well. But where I am now going things will look different; it will be up-hill work, a fierce battle with want and death, and not a life you, a delicate hot-house flower, might share with me. No, no; let me go," he said, gently disengaging himself from her embrace. "Farewell, and be happy, all of you!"

With these words he disappeared, leaving us all moved to the heart, and poor Valentine sobbing disconsolately.

In Paris everybody still remembers the dreadful scandal Count Waldheim's sudden disappearance occasioned. The scandal was perhaps the greater because the Count had left no debts unpaid. Such conduct society judged to be preposterous, incomprehensible. What business had a man to run away after paying all his debts, when by paying half of them, and cheating his creditors out of the rest, he could have gone on living like a gentleman? Two days later the scandal-

mongers had a new and still more sensational topic to comment upon, — Valentine Ghemar had broken all her engagements, and quitted Paris the same night. All the newspapers were full of romantic stories about this double disappearance, till at last an enterprising reporter of the "Figaro" succeeded in ascertaining that Count Waldheim had sailed from Havre to New York, and that Valentine Ghemar had been seen on board the same vessel. Since then nobody had ever heard from either of the fugitives; the huge waves of Parisian life closed over them, and in a month both were forgotten.

This old story was revived in my memory by the sight of the majestic waiter in a small New York *wirthschaft.* "What an extraordinary resemblance!" I thought; "could it be possible?" But I laughed at the bare suggestion that the brilliant, dashing Count Waldheim could have been transformed into a *kellner!*

Presently this personage returned, bearing the bottle of wine I had ordered, neatly

wrapped up in a napkin. While he was uncorking it, an elderly gentleman, apparently an *habitué* of the place, entered the garden, and passing by the waiter, tapped him familiarly on the shoulder, saying: "How do you do to-night, Herr Baron?"

I started involuntarily on hearing the title, and again looked fixedly at the man. The resemblance to Waldheim was perfectly wonderful.

"Why do they call you Herr Baron?" I asked, while he was filling my glass.

"It is a joke, sir, of some of the friends of the house," he answered, smiling discreetly; "they pretend that I look like a baron."

"Not like a baron," I retorted, staring him straight in the face, "but very much like a count. Did you ever hear of a Count von Waldheim?"

He turned suddenly pale, and his hand shook as he put the bottle down on the table.

"No, sir," he answered with difficulty; "I never heard the name."

His discomfiture had, however, already betrayed him. So I rose, and stretching out my hand to him, said in an undertone:

"Waldheim, don't you know me?"

"By all that is wonderful!" he exclaimed, "can this really be you, S——? For Heaven's sake do not speak to me here! Nobody knows me. And oh that you should be the first to see me in such a plight!"

"My dear friend!" I observed, "do not let this circumstance put you out in the least. If one of us is to be pitied, it is I. I am a journalist!"

Waldheim laughed, and said in a more cheerful tone,—

"Well, I am heartily glad to see you, all the same. In half an hour we close here. Will you then wait a moment for me outside? We can have a talk about old times."

I of course assented, and an hour later we were both established in a snug corner of a Third Avenue oyster-saloon in the company of a bottle of champagne to

which the "Herr Baron" had insisted on treating me.

"And Valentine Ghemar, where is she?" was my first question. "The papers said at the time that you had gone off together?"

"Yes, — quite in spite of me, however. I had not the remotest notion of the girl's escapade until she all of a sudden appeared on the ship when we were already out of the harbor. Poor girl! she was a madcap, but a good, loving soul."

"You speak of her in the past, — is she dead?"

"Worse," rejoined Waldheim sorrowfully; "she is married!"

"Married!" I echoed; "is it possible? To whom?"

"To an Alsatian named Schmittberger, a head clerk at one of the most important breweries in the city."

"How very extraordinary all that sounds," I exclaimed. "But now you must make a clean breast of it, my dear fellow. Come, tell me all that has befallen you on our glorious soil of liberty."

Waldheim filled both our glasses, and began by reciting in a lugubrious voice:

"'Infandum, regina, jubes renovare dolorem!'

My career so far has not been a glorious one. I have been alternately a washer in a public bath, a street-cleaner, a reporter on a German paper, a 'boy' on a farm in Jersey (the people actually called me 'boy,' and gave me the romantic name of Jimmy), a tramp, a sleeper in the parks, and a car-driver. My last position was that of a 'sandwich.' I trotted up and down Broadway clad as an Indian, with a great advertisement for Indian-clubs on my back, and another for some 'miraculous toothache-drops' on my breast. I was a combination-sandwich. Two enterprising minds had united their energies in utilizing my front and back.

"Once I narrowly escaped becoming a *valet de chambre.* That was after having passed three nights in Madison Square Park. An advertisement in the papers caught my eye of a lady wanting a man-

servant of distinguished appearance in a first-class household. I called at once at the house (which was indeed set up in the most elegant style) and proffered my services. The lady seemed greatly pleased with my appearance, and the thing was all settled between us, when she remarked: 'Of course you will have to shave your whiskers and mustache; it is a rule of my house.' The blood shot up into my face at these words. All of a sudden I became painfully aware of the position I was about to accept, with all the consequences it involved. I declined, and went back to the park.

"And yet, as you see, I have not escaped my fate. Instead of serving one, I serve many. I will tell you what it is, my dear fellow, a European aristocrat in this country is about the most useless being who ever trod the earth, unless he is rich. What have I ever learned that might have been of any use to me in this country? Except the art of spending money, nothing thoroughly. The only knowledge I could

put to profit here was that of a servant's or a waiter's duties, which I had formerly claimed from others. I know exactly the way in which a table-service must be laid out. The icing of champagne has no mysteries for me. I know the names of all the dishes existing in the world, and of all the wines worth drinking. I speak German, French, and English, without mentioning the Russian language, which is not likely to prove of great use in this line of business; with all these accomplishments, am I not a waiter born and bred? I tell you, my friend, a ruined nobleman coming to America is predestined to become a *kellner!*

"Do you know what was the most humiliating and horrible sensation I ever experienced in my life? It was the first time I heard a whistle and a 'Pst!' and realized the fact that both sounds were intended for me, and that I had to obey them. You may laugh at me, my dear fellow, but I tell you the idea of being whistled for like a domestic animal is any-

thing but enjoyable so long as a man is not accustomed to it."

"Poor Waldheim!" I exclaimed, laughing in spite of myself at the serio-comic good-humor with which he told me all his woes. "But you have not yet told me what became of Valentine in all this odyssey."

"Oh! she is a Parisian; and Parisian women are like cats,— they always fall on their feet. The first weeks of her stay here all went on smoothly. When I had finally got down to my last five hundred francs I gave them to the girl, and said, 'My dear Valentine, the best you can do now is to return to Paris;' but she refused peremptorily, saying that she would never leave me. Yet I was obliged to leave her to seek for work, for I was penniless. It was then that I passed a season on the Jersey farm as 'Jimmy.' While there I received a letter from Valentine, in which, after glowing protestations of love and fidelity, she announced to me her approaching marriage with that man Schmittberger, whose offer, she said, she had accepted only for

my sake! As soon as they were married, she added, she would procure me a suitable position in the office of the brewery, of which her bridegroom was head clerk, and then I could live happy forevermore, — emphasizing the words with three dashes! As you may imagine, I respectfully declined this tempting offer, and have never seen Mrs. Schmittberger since."

"*Requiescat in pace!*" I exclaimed, raising my glass. "But to return to your own affairs. Is it possible that you have got used to this business?"

"My dear fellow, honestly and truly, yes! Behold the decay of a great character! This business is not so bad after all. I am excellently paid, and in the two years during which I have worn this mask of 'Ernest' (this is the name I bear in the profession), I have saved a good deal of money."

"So you are content with your lot?" I said.

"Content? — no; but I take things as they are, without making them worse."

"Well, my dear Waldheim, I am heartily glad to have met you," I said, rising and shaking him by the hand. "I hope to see you again soon. Now it is late, time for both of us to go to sleep."

We took leave of one another like old friends, with mutual promises to meet often.

Some three weeks after our first meeting, however, I was sent on newspaper business to South Carolina, and remained there over three months. When I returned, the "Herr Baron" had left H. Gorrs' little *wirthschaft*, and had gone, — whither, no one knew.

A year passed without my hearing anything of Waldheim. A few days ago I caught sight by chance of a copy of the "Saratoga Advertiser," in which I noticed the announcement of the opening of a new "first-class hotel" in that fashionable watering-place. After the usual flourishes of rhetoric, promising the "distinguished traveller" all the advantages of a diminutive paradise on earth, I read the following words: —

"The manager, M. Ernest, will devote all his energies and extensive experience in hotel business to the direction of this new and vast enterprise."

There was no doubt possible; this must be the "Herr Baron." I wrote to him, and received a jubilant reply; his hotel was thriving, and fast becoming one of the most fashionable haunts of the place.

And thus Heinrich Kurd, Count von Waldheim, the brilliant Parisian *viveur*, son of the ex-grand marshal of the nobility of Livonia, some of whose forefathers had shed their blood in the Crusades, others of whom had at one time aspired to the throne of the German Empire, became the manager of a thriving hotel at Saratoga.

OUR NIHILIST.

OUR NIHILIST.

THE work at the office of the "New York Town Crier" was particularly brisk on a sultry night in May of the year 1879. Important news had come in from different parts of the world, — including Baxter Street and the Five Points, whereto an exploring party of enterprising reporters had been despatched on the preceding day to count the number of dead cats lying on the pavement and to analyze the perfume emanating from unemptied ash-barrels. The expedition had just returned, and was preparing an elaborate report, of which the various head-lines alone were to occupy over half a column. Moreover, a stenographic account had

come in by telegraph of all (including profane language) General Grant had uttered the day before on some wild island of the Pacific Ocean with a very queer name, the exact position of which it required the combined wisdom of all the editor's staff and numerous cyclopædias to ascertain. A "cable special" from the Paris correspondent, containing but the words, "Last week deuced bore," was about to be transformed into two columns of small type by a young man specially engaged for the purpose who had acquired a vast reputation from the inestimable faculty he possessed of producing in the shortest lapse of time possible any amount of "copy." Last, not least, an event of the utmost importance, on the issue of which the national honor of the people of the United States depended, was in process of development in Gilmore's Garden. An Englishman and an American were deciding between them the thrilling question whose legs and lungs were the strongest. In regard to the

latter topic, the "Town Crier" was next day to come out with a tremendous sensation, — a reporter had counted the drops of perspiration which had fallen from the brow of each "champion" during each "lap." The complicated mathematical calculations which this work necessitated, together with the account of the match itself, would fill two pages of the paper.

It is not more than might have been expected that on such a night as this, outside visitors were not welcome at the office. Accordingly, when a young man presented himself in the narrow and somewhat dingy waiting-room reserved for visitors at the entrance to the editorial sanctum, the old janitor peremptorily refused to take in even the card of the former, saying that he had been positively forbidden to disturb the editors in any manner.

"But, my dear man," expostulated the visitor in a somewhat haughty tone and with a marked foreign accent, "I am the bearer of a special message for Mr.

O'Bragan" (such was the name of the editor-in-chief). "At least take to him this letter, which is from the St. Petersburg correspondent of the 'Town Crier;' it is of the utmost importance."

This the old Cerberus consented to do, and disappeared behind the mysterious door. Left alone, the stranger looked about him, not without a certain curiosity.

"This then," he muttered in German, "is the palace of that mysterious power which, being the voice of the people, rules the people. Well, I imagined it otherwise. However, as it is, I will try and make the best of it."

At this moment the old janitor returned; and holding the door open for the young man to enter, said to him with that supreme indifference which a constant intercourse with journalists naturally engenders,—

"Mr. O'Bragan will see you, sir. Please step in."

A moment later the visitor was closeted

with the "chief" in the private office of the latter.

"I infer from the letter of Mr. Patrick Flanharty, our St. Petersburg correspondent," began Mr. O'Bragan, "that you can give us valuable information in regard to the present Nihilist movement in Russia."

"It is so," responded the stranger in a solemn voice. "I am the plenipotentiary of the Russian Central Revolutionary Committee for the United States. Here are my credentials."

Saying which, the young man drew from his breast-pocket a large paper, which he unfolded, displaying a diploma, printed in Russian and French, stating that the bearer, Ivan Sapeur, was specially recommended to all free nations and their representatives as an emissary of the Russian Central Revolutionary Committee, which Committee was fighting for the liberty of its own nation. The diploma was surmounted with a flaring red flag and a vignette representing a cheerful combination of axes, poniards, revolvers, and human skulls.

The sight of this document evidently impressed Mr. O'Bragan deeply, the more so as he was unable to understand one word of either of the languages it was printed in. He folded the paper carefully, and returned it to the plenipotentiary.

"Well, sir," continued the chief in a business-like tone, "I am somewhat short of time to-night. Will you please give an account in a few words, for the 'Town Crier,' of the present state of the Nihilist order in Russia, its origin and development, together, if possible, with a short epitome of Russian history, with a few sprightly anecdotes about Peter the Great, Siberian mines, and the like."

Mr. Ivan Sapeur looked for a moment bewildered by the variety of information required from him, but only for a moment. He then smiled complacently, and said, — "I write English fluently, and can put down the required notes in half an hour. Before doing it, however, let me ask you a favor, — a few letters of introduction to

distinguished families in the city. For the work I have to do of gaining the sympathies of the American people for the cause of Russian liberty, some personal connections with the leading members of society are absolutely necessary. You can do that without fear, Mr. O'Bragan. If even the letter of my friend Patrick Flanharty should not suffice to assure you of my respectability, — and I do not doubt that it does suffice, — a few weeks hence, when coming events shall allow me to speak openly, you will have ample opportunity to convince yourself of the fact that Russia has sent to your great country a representative of one of its first and noblest families."

Vividly impressed by the dignified demeanor of the stranger, which betrayed at first sight the true-born aristocrat, Mr. O'Bragán promised to give him the letters he asked for; whereupon the emissary went to work compiling the required "interview" about things in general in Russia, while the editor prepared the letters. An hour later, Ivan Sapeur had delivered his

manuscript, and with the letters in his pocket left the office of the "Town Crier," taking an entirely easterly direction, towards Franklin Square and Roosevelt Street. In this neighborhood, in a very dingy and ill-famed "hotel," the distinguished representative of one of the noblest families of Russia had taken up his abode. On reaching his home, he found it still alive with boisterous merriment. The parlor was full of people. The noble stranger entered it, and was immediately accosted by one of the ladies present, —

"You are late to-night, Jack; hang it all! what has kept you so long? The boys are restless without music. Sit down, and be quick about it!"

Whereupon the noble Ivan complied, — doubtless out of inborn gallantry. He sat down to the old broken piano which stood in the corner of the room, and began to drum a waltz in that careless, slovenly manner peculiar to all artists of this particular school.

"Oh, Mr. Sapeur, tell me more about the poor, dear, miserable wretches!" exclaimed Miss Lucy in her own sweet, gushing way. Miss Lucy was the daughter of Mr. Frederick B. Bonnard, a business man of considerable fortune, to whom was addressed one of the letters the editor-in-chief of the "Town Crier" had given to the illustrious fugitive. Miss Lucy was not pretty, neither was she very young; but she certainly was very gushing, and altogether "interesting," and the longer she lived, and the more she realized the fact that one man after another around her dropped into Hymen's lap without even looking at her, the more gushing and "interesting" she became. Thus far, however, she had gushed in vain.

"Oh, dear Mr. Sapeur, do tell me more about those heroic, poor, unfortunate martyrs, the Nihilists!" she repeated in a supplicating tone, folding her hands on the young man's arm.

For a while he was silent, seemingly overcome by the torrent of feeling which

invaded his heart. Then he answered in a low tone, a rapturous smile hovering about his lips, —

"You have said 'dear Mr. Sapeur!' Oh, could it be true! Could I indeed hope to have found a friend in you, what an unutterable joy it would be for a poor exile like me!"

He took her hand, which she blushingly abandoned to his grasp, and drew it to his lips. This touching scene took place in Mr. Bonnard's elegant parlor, after a late dinner to which the exile had been invited. He had in a few weeks become very intimate at the house. During his second or third visit he had adroitly dropped a few hints about his distinguished parentage in Russia. His elegant manners, together with the atmosphere of mystery which surrounded him, exercised a powerful charm even on Mr. Bonnard himself, who, though a practical business man, was not insensible to the honor of receiving a "Russian prince" at his house. As for Miss Lucy, she was from the very first day

captivated by the elegance, the good looks, and the misfortunes of this young and interesting representative of Nihilism. To her he had confided under an oath of secrecy his true name, — Count Adlerberg, a nephew of the minister of the Imperial Court of Russia, and a son of the Czar's most intimate friend.

"Can you doubt of my friendship, dear Count?" whispered Miss Lucy, while the illustrious exile still held her hand. "Could you have heard how I answered my father's warning this morning!"

"Your father's warning! Did he warn you against me?"

"Well, no, not directly. At least he only repeated what the Russian consul had told him, — that he, the consul, knew nothing about a Mr. Sapeur, and that he supposed the latter to be an obscure adventurer."

The exile sprang from his seat, a prey to an irrepressible agitation.

"Poor man!" he whispered. "I do not know whether I shall be able to save him

from the avenging arm of my comrade. How imprudent it was!"

"Whom do you mean?" asked Miss Lucy, considerably bewildered.

"The consul," answered Ivan, sighing heavily. "By slandering me he risks his life. Our awful Committee strikes surely and quickly!"

Miss Lucy shuddered.

"Fear not, Lucy!" exclaimed the exile rapturously. "Fear not that my — or may I say our? — happiness should be overshadowed by a bloody deed. Farewell! I will hasten home to take all possible measures to save that poor blinded official. Farewell, farewell, Lucy!"

The maiden answered not a word; but as the young man took her hand she bowed her head down on his breast, his lips touched her forehead, and his arms encircled her slender waist.

Two days later there appeared in the "New York Town Crier" the following warning addressed to the Russian consul:

C. R. R. C.[1]

The arm of the avenger is ready to strike! Beware!

You K., Russian consul-general, have dared to slander one of our friends, one of the most distinguished patriots Russia possesses. Beware!

The avenger is nigh at hand. If you dare repeat your slander, the blow shall fall and crush you!

C. R. R. C., *American Branch.*

NEW YORK, May 20, 1879.

When Mr. Sapeur made his appearance at Mr. Bonnard's house the same evening, Miss Lucy came to meet him, trembling and all in a flutter.

"Oh, dear me!" she exclaimed, "have you read that awful thing in to-day's 'Town Crier'? Your prediction has been fulfilled with terrible swiftness!"

The young man patted her soothingly on the shoulder.

"Fear not, my dear, noble Lucy," he said; "by my interference the man has

[1] Central Russian Revolutionary Committee.

been saved from instant death. If he keeps quiet now, his life is saved."

"Oh, how noble, how great you are!"

The interview between the young people was that night longer and more confidential than usual. While Mr. Bonnard dozed in his arm-chair after dinner, a whispered conference, seemingly of the utmost importance, took place, at the close of which the young exile took leave in the usual affectionate manner. Miss Lucy accompanied him to the street-door.

"To-morrow at two, my love, my dearest!" he whispered, giving her a parting kiss.

The next day at the appointed hour a *coupé* stopped at Mr. Bonnard's. Mr. Sapeur emerged from it. Mr. Bonnard was, as might have been expected, not at home; but Miss Lucy was there, with her bonnet on, ready for her promised drive. The hopeful pair stepped into the carriage, which drove off rapidly — not so rapidly, however, as to get out of sight of another carriage which followed Mr. Sapeur's

coupé at some distance, and contained three gentlemen, one of whom, doubtless for the sake of fresh air, had taken a seat on the box by the coachman's side.

An hour later Mr. Sapeur's *coupé* returned to the door of the Bonnards' house. The young man helped Miss Lucy out, and entered the house with her. They had barely had time, however, to step into the parlor when the door-bell again resounded, and on the servant opening it three gentlemen came in and asked to see Mr. Sapeur. Hearing his name, the young man became somewhat pale; but quickly recovering his composure, he opened the parlor door, and was about to ask what the gentlemen wanted, when, on perceiving the face of one of them, he suddenly grew ashy pale and staggered back into the room, while the man who had so frightened him exclaimed, —

"It is he; arrest him!"

One of the other gentlemen then stepped forward, and addressing the noble fugitive, said in a quiet tone, —

"I am sorry to disturb you and your lady, Mr. Herzenstein, alias Sapeur, alias Count Adlerberg; but we have looked for you so long that you really must follow us now. I arrest you on the charge of forgery, committed to the amount of ten thousand roubles, to the detriment of the Commercial Bank of Moscow. Here is the warrant."

At this moment a piercing cry rang through the room, and Miss Lucy, exclaiming, "Great heavens! he is my husband," fell senseless to the ground.

The illustrious exile stood motionless, dumfounded, seeming insensible to all things. The police officer took him by the arm and led him out of the room, at the same time directing the chambermaid, whom the noise had attracted to the door, to attend to her swooning mistress.

In the hall the young man who had first recognized the prisoner stepped up to him, and looking him straight in the face said, —

"Herzenstein, it is I who hunted you

down. You know me well; I am indeed a member of our secret organization, and will never allow our holy cause to be disgraced by rascals such as you."

Thereupon the party entered the carriage which waited at the door, and drove off.

Curiously enough, the omniscient and ubiquitous "Town Crier" kept the profoundest silence about these events, despite the considerable sensation they produced. But the very same day a "cable special" was despatched to Mr. Patrick Flanharty at St. Petersburg, which, though containing but one single word, was so explicit and so powerful that we dare not venture to reproduce it here.

A WRECKED LIFE.

A WRECKED LIFE.

SEVERAL months ago there appeared in all the city papers a notice containing a rather strange story about a man having been arrested on Sixth Avenue, where he was walking in a state utterly incompatible with the manners of modern civilization. With no other dress but his long, unkempt hair hanging over his shoulders, and a gray beard falling over his chest, he had rushed out in this unseemly condition from one of the by-streets, crying at the top of his voice, "Stella! Stella!" As might have been expected, he was not allowed to pursue his course farther than a block or so, when he ran into the sheltering arms of one of the guardians of the public peace,

who, after administering to this rebel child of Nature a preparatory clubbing, hailed a cab, pushed his patient in, pulled down the blinds, and drove off rapidly, before even the crowd of idlers who had already gathered could realize what a splendid opportunity for extraordinary and utterly unprecedented "fun" they had missed. Upon investigation, the man who had mistaken Sixth Avenue for a thoroughfare of the Hottentot metropolis proved to be a poor maniac who had lived for a year in a dark closet forming part of a basement room in West Forty-sixth Street, in which an old ragman had his abode. Nobody seemed exactly to know who he was or where he came from. The only information which the papers gave was that he had been sent to the City Hospital, and that in his former neighborhood he was known as the "mad Dutchman." No name, no means of identification, could be found.

Why did this story, which the very next day after its publication was buried under the waves of public life in the great city, —

that great, never-resting ocean of oblivion, — why did this story impress me so vividly? I know not. It was certainly not the mystery in which the whole affair appeared to be shrouded which attracted my attention. For what are those petty mysteries of every-day life which crowd our daily papers to a professional journalist? — a tool of his profession, an "item" to be disposed of as concisely as possible; nothing more.

It was that name, Stella, which the poor idiot had shouted out in the street in his madness, which sounded familiar to my ear and recalled in me long-forgotten memories of a once-dear friend. It was more than twelve years ago, in London. Things and men were different then, and looked, somehow, brighter and more hopeful than now. Even the London fog assumed a rosy hue, viewed by the light of the hopes, the dreams, and the illusions of early youth. And as I looked back into this long-past sunshine there arose in my memory a face which for me was in some way associated with all those hopes,

dreams, and illusions. George Nordhoff was indeed a bright fellow. Though about ten years my senior, he was in character and disposition certainly the junior of the two. He was a scion of one of the oldest families of Livonia, and held at the time the office of second secretary of the Russian embassy in London. I never met a man who so unmistakably seemed to have been born on the sunny side of life as Nordhoff. Not very rich, yet just rich enough to be able to indulge his artistic and social tastes; the universal favorite with young and old of both sexes; possessing an excellent physical constitution, and endowed with that precious quality of the mind which enables the man always to keep the "golden mean" in sentiment, passion, and enjoyment, — Nordhoff was the type of the happy man. Somehow or other, his happiness seemed contagious; all ill-humor vanished at his approach: and looking at his beaming, good-natured face, it seemed impossible to believe that such a thing as tears could exist in the world.

Poor Nordhoff! All this was true till the day when Stella crossed his path. She was an actress belonging to a French opera-bouffe troupe which had given a few performances in London. She was neither handsome nor clever; her singing was so wretched that it could only bear a comparison with her acting: and yet—who shall ever be able to fathom the mystery of love? Nordhoff fell madly in love with this second-rate *chansonnière*. All of a sudden he disappeared from the social circles and haunts we had been accustomed to visit together. Strange inconsistency of passion! He actually seemed to be ashamed of the unworthiness of his feeling, for he studiously concealed even from me what it was that engrossed all his time and energy. At last the day came when all attempts at dissimulation were useless. Nordhoff began to neglect even his official duties, light as they were. The ambassador, Baron Brunnow, had already on several occasions reprimanded him in a friendly, fatherly manner, and Nordhoff had promised to

amend; but in vain, the passion devouring him was stronger than even his sense of honor.

At last the catastrophe came. One night I awoke suddenly, and found Nordhoff standing at my bedside. He held a candle in his hand, and by its flickering light I could see that the appearance of the man was utterly transformed. His face was pale and worn, his dress in disorder, his sunken eyes had an unsteady, searching, almost fierce look in them, like that of a hunted animal.

"Get up and help me!" he gasped. "I must be off this morning to America, or I shall be a dead man to-night. Don't ask me any questions, if you still have any friendship for me, but lend me the money for the passage."

I had, indeed, no questions to ask; his face was answer enough to all. I got up, and we went together to one of those benefactors of the human race for whom there is no difference between day and night when a service can be rendered — at 100

per cent. On leaving the money-lender, Nordhoff positively refused to let me accompany him farther. We took leave of each other on the street.

From that time I never heard any more of Nordhoff. His disappearance produced something of a sensation, and was spoken of and commented upon a good deal. In due time, however, the whole story was forgotten; and even I, it must be owned, scarcely thought of Nordhoff and his miserable love until the name of Stella, which I found in the story of the poor maniac, revived in me old recollections. Could it be possible, I thought, that it had come to this?

At all events, I resolved to investigate the matter. At the station-house to which the maniac was first conveyed, I was informed that he had been sent to the City Hospital. I proceeded thither accordingly. The employees had no difficulty in remembering the case, and I was directed to bed No. 302. A young doctor accompanied me.

"What is the matter with the man?" I asked on the way.

"Appears to be softening of the brain," was the answer; "he is not likely to live long. Curious case though."

We had by this time reached the room in which No. 302 lay, and we approached the bed. The patient was lying closely wrapped up in his blanket, his face turned to the wall, either sleeping or insensible.

"Do you want to see his face?" asked the doctor; and before I was able to motion him not to disturb the patient, the latter turned suddenly, and with a blank stare exclaimed: "Who is there?—Stella?"

His whole figure, as he leaned heavily on his elbow, appeared emaciated and worn to a skeleton; his hair had been cut short, showing painfully every protruding eminence of the skull; his long beard was gray and wild; the vacant stare of his large, deeply sunken gray eyes gave to the whole face an expression of idiocy which rendered the features nearly unrecogniza-

ble: and yet, notwithstanding all this dreadful change, I knew the man instantly.

"Nordhoff!" I cried, bending over him and looking him straight in the face, "do you know me?"

A gleam of intelligence seemed for a moment to pass over his face, but only for a moment. Then again the same vacant expression settled on it, and he muttered: "Who is there? Is it Stella?"

There was no hope. Love — the truest, most ardent, most passionate love a man is capable of — had done its work here to the end.

II.

By degrees, by questioning the ragman in whose miserable dwelling Nordhoff had found a shelter, the neighbors, and some of the associates of his former life, I succeeded in tracing the history of the unhappy man back to the time when he had landed at New York with his wife, — for he had, before starting, married that French girl.

He had always been a lucky man, and it seemed at first that his good fortune had accompanied him over the ocean. He found lucrative employment at the office of a rich broker, a Polish Jew who had formerly been a business agent of Nordhoff's father in a small way, and was now proud and happy to give a lift to the son. All went on smoothly enough for a year, until a French opera-bouffe company visited New York. Among the singers belonging to the latter, Stella found some former acquaintances. She went to see them, and the demon of the stage seized again on her. Despite the earnest entreaties of her husband, she passed all her evenings and part of her nights at the theatre in company with some of the wildest Bohemians of the troupe. Among these the women were all very elegant, and covered with jewels they were proud of, which they boastingly showed to Stella.

"What is the use of your having married that fellow," one of those plain-spoken

"ladies" exclaimed, "if he is unable to give you even a decent outfit?"

This taunt was not forgotten by Stella. She loved Nordhoff in her way; but from that moment the notion settled in her mind that somehow he did not treat her as he ought and as she had a right to expect.

"I have given up for him all my prospects," she thought; "and now I must cook his dinner for him. It 's shameful!"

For all he had given up for her she seemed to be utterly blind.

At last the day came when the woman openly accused her husband of neglecting her.

"You make lots of money," she cried, bursting into tears, "and I have not a decent dress to put on. I see it all; you do not love me any more!"

Poor Nordhoff tried hard to satisfy his wife's most extravagant wishes. In addition to his office work he succeeded in getting night employment on one of the great newspapers of the city. For a year he worked like a galley-slave, earning about

five thousand dollars. But what was this sum to a woman used to the extravagances of Parisian fast life? Scenes of peevish, worrying complaints became on her part daily more frequent. Nordhoff was comparatively happy only while at work, and he actually came to dread the moment he had to go home. And still he loved her with a mad, clinging passion, against which all the dictates of reason remained powerless.

One summer evening after dark he was taking her out for a walk on Broadway. As they passed the doorway of the Fifth Avenue Hotel the throng separated them for a moment, Nordhoff remaining a few paces behind. At that instant he heard an elegantly dressed man who had stood at the entrance of the hotel hall accost his wife in a familiar voice, —

"Hallo, Stella! Be there to-night."

Nordhoff sprang forward, and seizing the man by the arm, exclaimed: "This lady is my wife, sir! Who are you?" The man thus accosted seemed at first inclined to

resent the action as well as the words, as he was much taller and stronger than Nordhoff; but as he looked down on the enraged husband his expression suddenly changed. He cast one more glance at Stella, and then, bowing courteously to Nordhoff, said, —

"Excuse me! I regret my mistake most sincerely. I am short-sighted, and have mistaken your wife for a — a woman whose name I dare not even mention in the presence of a lady whose husband is a gentleman. Once more, excuse me!"

The stranger walked away, leaving Nordhoff in a fearful state of excitement, uncertainty, and dread of something, the horror of which he could scarcely fathom. Seizing his wife's arm with an iron grip, he led her home without uttering a word or heeding her lamentations about his "brutality." Neither did he ask her any questions when they reached home. He was trembling from head to foot, as if with terror. At length, mastering his emotion, he exclaimed in a hoarse whisper, —

"Tell me where you have seen that man!"

"Did not he tell you himself that he had made a mistake?" was the indignant reply.

But Nordhoff's suspicion, once aroused, was not so easily to be allayed. He pressed Stella with questions, and there was an expression in his eyes, riveted on her, that somehow awed her into a partial avowal. She told him she had met that gentleman at a *café* in Sixth Avenue, "a very decent place," she averred, where she had been but once to eat some ice-cream. Nordhoff pressed her no further, but resolved to watch her. One night, about a week later, instead of going to the office of his journal, he remained concealed behind a corner of the street he dwelt in, whence he could have a full view of his house. He had been waiting scarcely half an hour when he saw his wife come out of the house, and, after looking about her carefully, hail a car and drive away. Resolved to have done once for all with

his suspicions, Nordhoff followed the car on foot. He ran thus for over a mile, panting for breath, the perspiration rolling in large drops from his forehead. At length the car stopped and Stella alighted. She crossed the street rapidly and entered an "establishment," over the entrance of which Nordhoff read the words, —

CONCERT HALL. ENTRANCE FREE!
BEAUTIFUL BARMAIDS IN ATTENDANCE!

Half mad with rage and misery, he pushed the door open, entered, walked straight to the table at which he saw Stella sitting, and took a chair. The woman became pale as death, and was about to run away; but Nordhoff held her fast.

"You need not fear me," he said in an apparently calm tone; "I shall not interfere with you any longer. Good-by!"

Saying which, he rose, and walked out of the room. Whither he went that night no one knows. He simply disappeared, as so many people disappear in our great

metropolis. His name was added to the list of the "missing," and a few days later he was forgotten.

A week after the meeting at the concert-hall a policeman picked up in one of the most disreputable by-streets of the west side a man lying in the gutter, apparently in a state of drunken insensibility. Before the judge the man was unable to give any name, and so was sent for ninety days' incognito to the Island. He must have been very drunk indeed, for during all these ninety days he did not recover his senses, and remained in a state of physical and moral lethargy, utterly indifferent to all surroundings. In due time he was released, and came back to New York. Wandering listlessly through the streets in his absent, unconscious way, he came upon an old ragman who was bending under the load of a bag by far exceeding his strength. The released prisoner offered to help him, took the bag on his shoulders, carried it to the old man's home, and after depositing his load in the middle of the dingy

basement-room, sat down on it and smiled blandly in the old man's face. Wise political economists call poor men "dangerous and ill-natured." Perhaps this was the reason why the old ragman, who certainly had always belonged to the poorest of the poor, had pity on this miserable specimen of humanity which had followed him into his den, and let him remain where he was. During the day the poor, harmless idiot helped the old man in his work. At night he lay down on the rags he had gathered during the day.

So this strange pair lived on for nearly a year. Suddenly the sick man seemed to grow worse. He became restless, refused resolutely to leave his couch, and at night screamed and cried and talked all sorts of nonsense. A few days later, precisely on the anniversary of Nordhoff's parting from Stella, the ragman's weak-minded comrade executed that extraordinary freak which again brought him into collision with the police authorities, who had him conveyed to the City Hospital.

There he lay now, — the miserable wreck of the brilliant Nordhoff. I visited him daily, and watched the progress of the sickness which was to give the death-stroke to his ruined mind and body. On the tenth day he died. A few minutes before closing forever, his eyes suddenly shone with a gleam of their former lustre, a smile flitted over his lips, he whispered, "Stella!" and fell back on the pillows — dead.

And Stella? What became of her? Who knows, or who cares to know?

THE STAGE FIEND.

THE STAGE FIEND.

THE wind howled and swept down Fifth Avenue with a dismal moan, rattling the shutters and weather-cocks of the silent, sombre mansions which line the Corso of the New World. The day — a dreary, wet, and cold November day — was gradually waning into night. Here and there a street-lamp flickered, and from behind the closely drawn blinds of the windows a ruddy light shone into the street, suggestive of comfortable homes and warm fire-places — for those who enjoyed the supreme happiness of a home on this dreary night.

This was evidently not the case with an old fiddler who stood on the sidewalk

bareheaded, with his gray hair flowing in the wind, plying his instrument diligently. Through the stillness of the street the sounds of his violin were heard distinctly, and seemed less discordant than performances of street musicians are generally apt to be. His repertoire was not rich; "Parigi cara," from the "Traviata," "Santa Lucia," and a romance by Gordigiani were all he could play. But he played these songs with genuine feeling, with tolerable precision, and with that peculiar *chic* which immediately betrayed the Italian performing his own national music. After the end of each piece he wistfully looked up at the closed windows on both sides, a shiver passed over his emaciated, poorly clad figure, and after waiting a few moments without result, he again took up his violin and began the next piece.

While the angry November night closed in on this dreary picture of human desolation and helplessness, the glow of a great fire burning cheerfully in a luxuriantly furnished parlor of the house at the gate

of which the old musician was standing, shone on another picture of solitary grief and misery. A young woman, dressed with a sort of careless luxury in a morning robe of yellow silk, paced fretfully to and fro in the large room. Now she approached the piano and played with one finger the first notes of "Parigi la bella;" then she sprang up again, wrung her hands, while something escaped her lips which sounded very much like an Italian oath, and yawned in the most dismal and (we are sorry to say) inelegant fashion. Here in this abode of wealth and luxury, *ennui*, the dreadest of all the monsters which assail and torment humanity, had evidently fixed his residence.

Suddenly its fair victim pulled at the bell with an angry jerk which sent the sound ringing and vibrating through the whole house. A young chambermaid appeared on the threshold.

"Annette," said the mistress in French, "go and call that musician into the basement. I feel terribly dull to-night; per-

haps a few minutes' conversation with that man will amuse me. But he must not know that I am the mistress of the house. I will change my dress and go downstairs. You and Jean treat me just as if I were the lady's maid, or something of the kind. Do you hear?"

The young girl smilingly nodded and withdrew. She was evidently used to the many whims of her capricious mistress. A moment later the playing in the street ceased, and the voice of the old man was heard in the basement showering blessings in very imperfect English on the head of the "noble signora" who had taken pity on a forlorn, helpless old man.

While he was speaking, the lady herself entered the basement-room. She had changed her dress for a plainer gown; and in pursuance of the directions they had received, neither Annette nor the man-servant Jean noticed in any way her presence.

"Well, have you a good appetite?" she asked the old man in Italian. "The lady

has ordered us to give you as much as you like to eat and drink."

"Oh, my most humble thanks to her excellency!" the old man exclaimed rapturously, pointing to the wine and the slices of cold roast beef which stood before him on the table. "I have never had so good a meal since the blessed days in our own beloved Italy when I played first violin at San Carlo to the singing of the great Barberini."

At this name the lady suddenly sprang up, and with an imperative gesture imposing silence on her servants, took a seat close by the musician.

"So you have accompanied the Barberini?" she asked in an eager tone.

"Many a time, signorina; and I shall never forget those nights if I live to be as old as Methuselah. Oh, what an artist, what a blessed child of God she was! And what a shame it was for her to quit the stage!"

"You think so?" retorted the lady sharply. "Do not you know that she left

the stage to marry a man whom she dearly loved?"

"I know that well enough. But where can she find that human love which could replace the glory, the excitement, the ineffable joy Art alone bestows on her favorite children? I do not know whom the Barberini married; I have once been told her husband was an American banker. If so, she is now probably very rich, and living amid the most exquisite luxury; and yet — well, I am sure she feels dull and miserable, and bitterly regrets the time when she possessed nothing in the world but her voice, and that voice alone sufficed to bring the whole world to her feet."

The lady answered not a word. A dark frown had settled on her brow while the old man spoke. When he had ended, she sprang from her chair and walked quickly out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

The old man looked in speechless wonder from Annette to Jean.

"What is the matter?" he at length uttered. "Who is this lady?"

"Well, old gentleman," retorted the young *soubrette*, with a mischievous smile, "you have made a nice mess of it! Do you know who the lady is you have spoken to? No other than Adelina Barberini herself, now Mrs. Henry Thorndike Van Puyten!"

The poor old violinist's consternation may be easier imagined than described. At first he insisted on going upstairs and imploring the "signora's" pardon, but yielded at length to the voice of reason; and after muttering countless invocations to all the saints whose names he could muster, he left the house heavily laden with victuals of every description, with which the good-natured Annette had stuffed his pockets.

If he could have witnessed the effect his words had produced on the lady of the house, the old violinist's distress would have been still greater. On leaving her *protégé* Mrs. Van Puyten returned to the parlor and sat down on a low stool near the fire. With heaving bosom, her brows contracted, and her beautiful black eyes shining with

tears, she sat there for a long while, looking steadfastly into the flames.

Her whole past life appeared to her as in a mirror. She again saw the brilliantly illuminated, crowded house; she heard the storm of applause rising around her; she felt once more that atmosphere of thrilling, feverish excitement which hovers about the mysterious and picturesque world of the stage. It was there she had made the acquaintance of her present husband, who was one of her most ardent admirers. Frequent meetings in society ripened the acquaintance to intimacy, and at length to love, or at least to what might have been easily mistaken for love. He loved in her his own vanity, the proud satisfaction of having attracted the notice of a woman at whose feet the richest potentates of the financial and aristocratic world had fallen in vain. She had been captivated by his youth, his original wit, and last, not least, by the dazzling prospect of a life full of social triumphs, of all the luxuries which millions can purchase.

They were married, and came to live in New York. Two years had passed since, — two years of the bitterest disappointment. Her husband, as well as the life of those circles of New York society which she naturally entered, proved on closer acquaintance to be widely different from the brilliant picture the *ci-devant* Barberini had drawn of both while the "charm of the unknown" still surrounded them. H. Thorndike Van der Puyten (of the name Thorndike and of his unquestionable Knickerbocker descent he was immeasurably proud) was what one is apt to call "a capital fellow." A thorough sportsman, he possessed all those qualities which rendered life enjoyable in a quiet, everyday fashion, without ever becoming uncomfortable or clashing with the ways and manners of the so-called "world." In the limits prescribed by fashion he found all that his heart or his imagination could desire. All interests and pursuits lying beyond these limits were put down as eccentric or "improper."

That the passionate Italian prima donna, accustomed from her earliest youth to the bustle and freedom of stage life, should feel from day to day more miserable in this narrow sphere of barren social conventionalities, was not more than might have been expected. Gradually her temper changed. She grew fretful, melancholy. Violent scenes between husband and wife became daily more frequent, and were the more bitter as neither of the parties had a feeling of being in the wrong. Little by little, poor Thorndike came to consider his home as the very reverse of paradise, and was happy when business afforded him the welcome pretext for a more or less prolonged absence. Just now he had gone as far as San Francisco, to inspect a mine he had an important interest in. This forced solitude had still more embittered the signora's temper, for she loved her husband still, and though tormenting him when he was present, missed him painfully when he left her. She had no intimate friends, and derived no pleasure from a superficial

intercourse with the fashionable "set" to whom her husband had introduced her. Thus she passed nearly all her days alone, with no other company than the recollections of her past eventful life, and repeating over and over again, in the dreary notes of the Venetian gondolier's chant, Dante's verse, —

> "Nessun maggior dolore
> Che ricordarsi del tempo felice
> Nella miseria."

The effect which the unexpected meeting with an old associate of those "happy times" produced on the fretting mind and rebel heart of the *artiste*, can more easily be imagined than described. The old violinist had by his words, which corresponded so exactly with her innermost feelings, raised a storm in the heart of the ex-prima donna. The "fever of the stage" seized on her with uncontrollable power.

"No," she exclaimed to herself, springing up from her seat by the fire, "I will not, I cannot bear it any longer. This

old beggar with his fiddle is happier than I, for he at least —"

A sudden idea seemed to strike her. She lifted her head with an eager look, and an exulting smile crept over her lips. She sat down at her writing-desk, snatched a sheet of note-paper out of one of the drawers, and wrote hastily a few lines. Then she rang the bell; and giving Annette the letter, said, "Be sure to have it sent the very first thing to-morrow morning."

On leaving the room the chambermaid read the address: "Mr. Maurice Savarez, 16 W. Fourteenth Street, City." The name was that of a well-known operatic manager. The pretty *soubrette* smiled slyly on delivering the letter to Jean. Both domestics looked at one another in a knowing way, but said nothing.

The next morning, before eleven, an elegant *coupé* dashed to the door of Mrs. Van Puyten's residence, and thence leaped out in a state of feverish excitement the well-known little figure of Savarez. Adelina remained closeted with him for more than an hour.

The result of this conference became evident the very next day. Mysterious notices were published by the papers, hinting at the possibility and even probability of an impending "event" of unparalleled interest to the musical world.

A few days later there appeared in all the journals the following card: —

ADELINA BARBERINI

HAS THE HONOR OF ANNOUNCING THAT SHE WILL GIVE A

CONCERT,

FOR THE BENEFIT OF A POOR ARTISTE, AT THE ACADEMY OF MUSIC

On November 28.

The news of the impending event ran like lightning through the city. The papers published biographical sketches of the *artiste*, giving wonderful particulars of her former triumphs, and hinting delicately at her present high social position. In a few days every available seat in the house was reserved. Many had sent tenfold the actual price for their tickets; the stock-

holders of the Academy themselves on this extraordinary and memorable occasion paid full price for their boxes. Before the concert had taken place the receipts had already attained a sum which Signor Savarez declared to be unparalleled in the annals of musical enterprise.

At length the great day came. The programme, distributed only on the morning of the 28th, added still more to the interest of the event. Signora Barberini was to appear as Margherita in the third act of Gounod's "Faust," seconded by the first *artiste* of the Italian Opera.

Long before eight o'clock the Academy was crowded to its utmost capacity. A thrill of suspense and of intense curiosity ran through the house while the overture, played by the orchestra of the Italian Opera (who had volunteered their services for the occasion), and the other numbers of the programme, all performed by exquisite *artistes*, were being disposed of. All the interest, all the attention of the thousands of people who crammed the house were

concentrated on that one act of "Faust" which was to close the concert. At length the curtain rose, displaying the well-known scenery of Margherita's garden. Siebel sang his air to the flowers, Faust (one of the few good tenors still treading on earth) rendered, with exquisite feeling, his invocation to the *dimora casta e pura;* the wicked tempter Mephisto placed his casket of jewels on a chair; then came some soft, mellow tones in the orchestra, announcing the entrance of Margherita, the garden-door opened, and then, like the roar of the ocean, there arose from all parts of the house a deafening storm of cheers and applause which drowned every other sound. One moment the *artiste* stopped at the door, seemingly dazzled by the enthusiasm she excited; then she advanced slowly, bowing as she went. When she reached the footlights the musical director — a gray-haired veteran of the artistic world — rose from his seat, and bowing low to the *artiste*, presented her, in the name of the orchestra, with a beautiful nosegay of white roses and violets.

This was the signal for a new and still more enthusiastic ovation. Following the example of the musicians and their director, nearly the whole audience rose from their seats, while a shower of flowers was poured from the proscenium boxes on the stage. In the midst of all this frenzy of applause the Barberini stood motionless, with bowed head, a smile of unutterable happiness illumining her face, and big tears running down her cheeks.

Never had the great *artiste* looked more beautiful. She had disdained to follow the tradition, and had not concealed under a blond wig her own beautiful black hair, which fell in two shining tresses over her shoulders; her eyes, flashing with happiness, triumph, and tears, gave a peculiar lustre to all her features. She stood there in all her dazzling beauty, with heaving bosom, like a statue, — a work of art of wonderful perfection, but full of passion and life.

More than five minutes elapsed before the first enthusiasm subsided so as to allow the *artiste* to begin her part. How she

sang it; how after each air the applause broke out afresh; how many times she was called before the curtain at the close of the act, — all this baffles description, and is still fresh in the memory of all who were fortunate enough to witness that remarkable performance.

While the applause and the frenzy of the public were at their highest, nobody noticed an old man, in a shabby black coat, standing at one of the doors of the parquet. With arms stretched out towards the stage, he stood there sobbing like a child, and muttering in a broken voice, —

"What an angel! What an angel of heaven she is!"

On her arrival at home the *artiste* was received with another and still more touching demonstration. The chorus of the Italian Opera waited with lighted torches at her door, and serenaded her, the music consisting exclusively of Italian national airs.

The night was far advanced when Mrs. Van Puyten at last found herself alone in

her bedroom. She was tired out by all the emotions of the evening, but could find no rest. She paced about the room with a nervous, restless step, wringing her hands, sighing deeply, convulsive sobs shaking from time to time her whole figure. A fearful struggle, on the issue of which her whole future life depended, seemed to be raging in her breast.

The pale light of a November morning was breaking through the curtains when Mrs. Van Puyten sat down to her table and dashed off a few hasty lines on a sheet of note-paper. The letter began with the words, —

"Forgive me, forgive me! I cannot bear this life any longer! It would but render us both still more miserable!"

Two months later, on a lovely night in January, the great hall of the San Carlo Theatre at Naples was crowded with all that fashion and art could muster in the great city. From Rome, from Florence, the connoisseurs had assembled to wel-

come the great Barberini back to the stage. It was an event which all Italy celebrated as a national festival.

While the orchestra were tuning their instruments many among the audience noticed an old man sitting in the row of the first violins, and wearing an expression of unutterable joy and solemn triumph on his lean, wrinkled face. As he took up his violin and adjusted it under his chin, he looked more like a priest preparing for a solemn ritual than an orchestra musician about to do his night's work.

"It is I, my friend," he whispered to his neighbor in an exulting tone, "who brought her back to the stage. Thank God!"

GRAZIELLA THE MODEL.

GRAZIELLA THE MODEL.

ONE day last summer as Bartholdi and I were going to the studio of a rather eccentric friend of ours, known to the art world as Frederic Holt, I was suddenly startled by these words from my companion, —

"Where on earth, old fellow, do you rake up subjects for your little stories?"

"Ah!" I exclaimed, "do you find my little stories so trivial?"

I confess I was just a trifle nettled by the tone of the question, which was not complimentary, but on the contrary seemed to imply a slight feeling of scorn for my brain labors past, present, and future. I was hurt; but having no extraordinary

opinion of my friend's literary judgment, I stifled my anger and replied in a calm unruffled voice, —

"To-day, my good friend, you may perhaps see the kind of place wherein I not unfrequently find subjects for my 'little stories,' as you are pleased to call them. At the same time," I continued, with that calm irony for which I am noted, "you must keep your eyes open; for there are certain people who are unable to see beyond their own noses, and who value literary work by its bulk, rather than by its quality. Attar of roses, my friend, is offensive to the coarse senses of certain people, and I have no doubt there are men living in this world who would ask in their ignorance where Shakspeare picked up the materials for his little story of Hamlet."

As I concluded my bitterly sarcastic speech we found ourselves in a sort of court-yard built in the Italian style of no particular era, at the end of which was a door cut in the wall of an old house. Guarding this door were two lions in an

attitude suggesting that they intended to hurl themselves against the bars of their cage. Their eyes were flashing, their mouths open, and their tongues protruding; but as these terrible beasts were only in the form of a rough design sketched on the wall, we boldly approached the door and passed it with no further mishap than a slight soiling of our coats with white-wash and crumbling plaster.

For several days past Frederic Holt had been almost a fixture in his studio, working with tremendous energy on a picture in which he intended to display all his technique and at the same time reveal his knowledge of drawing and of color. His great desire was at the same time to arouse the interest of a particular patron well known to the community of artists; but on account of some circumstances only known to himself, Frederic was compelled to put the finishing touches to his already over-elaborated picture, with the sickening conviction that, after all, it must go to the general Academy exhibition, and there be

subjected to the cold and unsympathetic criticisms of a hard-hearted public.

Our friend had studied for many years in Europe, and not only had a great reputation, but had also produced a few good pictures, — which is a paradox I do not care to explain. As soon as it was known that an interesting subject was under treatment on his easel, friends and the public generally were attracted to his studio.

According to his custom, the artist had chosen an historical subject; and fondly believing that his talents would be judged from the size of his picture, he had filled an immense canvas with a representation called "Nero's Dream." This represented a bare-legged man, confined in the Laocoön folds of a streaming toga, standing on the ruins of a Parthenonic building and wildly shivering at the sight of a multitude of phantoms that were scantily dressed in sheets and ornamented with clanking iron chains.

We found our friend moving nervously about among his visitors, constantly ap-

proaching his picture to turn it a little to the right or left, arranging the curtains to obtain the best possible light, and at the same time watching the faces of his guests as if he hoped to read the secrets of their very souls.

"Superb, grand, gigantic, massive, bold, delicate, fine, delightful, Michelangelesque," were the adjectives freely bandied about.

"Do you not find relief in the picture, a general mastery of color, and good perspective?" Frederic modestly inquired, while he enjoyed to the full the praises of his indulgent brother artists.

"Magnificent! perfect!" they exclaimed; and they turned their backs to the picture to enjoy the more refreshing sight of a keg of beer that was in the corner of the studio, and served to modify the customary acidity of the critical throat and voice.

In the din of voices no one in the room seemed to hear several discreet taps on the door; as there was no response to them, the *portière* that screened the entrance was

quietly raised, and the figure of a young girl appeared.

"Ah! that's Graziella!" exclaimed several of the men.

"Come in!" said Frederic, advancing towards her and holding out his hand.

"I fear I shall disturb you," she said, with a foreign but agreeable accent. "Excuse me; I will come back another day."

Frederic, who would willingly have detained the girl, saw her flit from the room with the grace and shyness of a chamois.

"There goes an exception to her sex in general and her nation in particular," said the artist with a half-sigh.

"Ah, how charitable! how gallant! how interesting!" exclaimed one of the young men present. "But I should like to teach your exception good manners," he added, rushing to the window and making pantomimic signs to the retreating Graziella, who turned her back on him, evidently vexed for having indulged in a retrospective glance.

The unabashed young fellow approached

the artist, and digging him in the ribs, said, —

"You are a lucky dog, Holt! We understand, you know. Artist and model! Lake of Como and Ovid!"

The turn the conversation had taken caused some anger in the breast of the painter of "Nero's Dream;" and drawing himself up, he explained with indignant warmth that the girl was no ordinary frequenter of studios, and that having nothing in common with those of the profession, she was the impersonation of modesty and virtue.

"I would answer for her as for my sister," he exclaimed, with flushed cheeks and flashing eyes.

"See here, Frederic, don't fly off at a tangent. She is pretty, confoundedly pretty. How long have you known her?"

"Only for a few months. She is reserved and good, and worthy the honest love of any man."

"Go it, Fred, my boy! I say, though, if you keep on you will end by speaking

blank verse. By the way, though, what a splendid title and subject for a picture: 'The Organ-Grinder's Child; or, the Artist's Infatuation.'"

"Laugh on, my critic! and yet I still dare to affirm that the girl is honest and good."

In fact Graziella merited all that the artist could say in her defence. At the age of fifteen she had left her native country, the superb coast of Sorrento, to emigrate with a band of Neapolitans, and a few weeks later had disembarked with a miscellaneous assortment of good and evil at Castle Garden, New York.

Having neither father nor mother, Graziella had brought with her no other souvenir than the memory of her native village and her young *lazzarone* lover, who passed his days in sleeping under the vines by the sea, often having no other breakfast than the warm rays of sunlight that penetrate every nook and corner of that favored land.

Upon the arrival of Graziella and her Neapolitan friends in New York the band

became scattered, though a large number settled in the neighborhood of Marion and Crosby streets, while Graziella found a home for herself with an old countrywoman of hers in a dreary house devoid of sunshine and all other comforts, except that of the protection and good-will of the old woman.

The girl's only pleasure was to sally forth at daybreak, and after a long walk to wander about Castle Garden, which became her habitual promenade; so that one might have supposed that the bright little figure bloomed there like the other flowers.

After the fashion of many of her countrywomen she retained the national costume, which consisted of a green petticoat short enough to reveal her tidy shoes and stockings, a dark velvet bodice, the never-failing striped apron, and the white head-covering that set off to advantage the glossiness of the thick black hair. The cleanliness of her apparel amounted almost to daintiness.

As an exception to her race, her complexion was pink and white, in strong contrast to the usual dark-olive hue of the ordinary Neapolitan. Her complexion was not only fine, but her features were of the utmost regularity. Coral lips, tiny mouth, and large, tender eyes, shaded by long lashes, arrested the attention of passers-by; and not unfrequently poor Graziella was frightened by the undisguised admiration of the unknown who congregated at the Battery on Sunday afternoons.

If by chance she was accosted by some unknown person, she quietly betook herself to another part of the park, to dream in peace in the beautiful October sunlight of New York.

These hours of *dolce far niente* became less and less frequent, however; for Graziella, like her compatriots, was obliged to earn her daily bread, which she had also to share with the old woman to whom she owed shelter.

To provide for her wants this girl had two resources; namely, to pose as a model

for artists during the morning, and in the afternoon to turn the handle of a small organ in the most frequented streets.

She had been initiated into the profession of model by Frederic Holt, who had seen her one day turning the hand-organ opposite the window of Martinelli's restaurant, where he was dining. Her natural beauty and simple grace at once attracted his trained eye, that was ever on the alert for the picturesque and the beautiful. Soon the girl became a favorite in the studios, where by posing three or four hours daily she was eventually enabled to hire a more cheerful room for herself and the old woman, whom she would not abandon in the days of her comparative prosperity.

Notwithstanding her seeming contentment, a sigh would sometimes escape from the little Graziella's lips, — the mute expression of a longing desire to see her lover, Salvatore, who was so far away.

Her only amusement in the evening was to count up the little earnings of the day, over and above the modest needs of the

small household. An old woollen stocking was the receptacle for these coins, and a dilapidated chest the safety deposit vault of the stocking.

"And when shall I have five hundred dollars, I wonder?" Graziella would repeat to herself with weary, yearning iteration.

Five hundred dollars!

That was the sum the young girl had fixed on to carry back with her to Sorrento. It was to be the dowry she had set her heart on, — her marriage-basket the day that she should become the legitimate wife of worthy Salvatore, who in the mean time was patiently idling away his time and awaiting his bride, sleeping under the orange-trees like a dormouse.

Alas! it would take a long time yet to collect five hundred dollars; many pictures must be posed for before the magic sum would be complete.

Frederic Holt felt a tender sentiment for his little model, — a sentiment whose full meaning he perhaps did not interpret even to himself. He felt happy when she

was in his studio, and loved to hear the sound of her pleasant little voice and note the changeful expression of her bright, dazzling eyes. She was only a model; yet he had never dreamed of paining her little heart with an evil action. The idea of marriage with her was ridiculous; and yet how dark his studio seemed to grow when she left it! what sunshine she brought with her, and what a lonely life was his!

The day following that of the reception at the studio, Graziella reappeared according to her promise. The door being open, she entered without knocking, to find herself quite alone in the room which the artist had just left.

On entering soon after, he heard a little cry of joy, and saw his model standing before a bright oil-sketch hung against the wall, in a corner usually concealed by a heavy tapestry curtain; and here, amid a quantity of studio rubbish and sketches brought from Italy, was the painting that had attracted Graziella's attention. She

clapped her hands with pleasure, while her breath came more and more quickly, and her great eyes dilated as though receiving a reflection from the vivifying Italian sun.

The whole attitude of the girl was that of ecstasy. "Oh, it is that! It is that!" she murmured. "The laurel-trees, the wild chestnut behind the hill, where the boys play mora; and, blessed Maria! the very houses are there, even the one where I was born! How beautiful it is! how happy it makes me to see my country again! Ah, if I could only remain here looking at it forever!"

The girl had fallen on her knees as before a Madonna, repeating to herself, —

"How lovely it is! It seems as though I must be back in Sorrento, and Salvatore must be coming to meet me! I was cold a little while ago; now I am warm. I feel the sun upon the canvas, which sparkles in the tree-tops and on the sea. It is beautiful, so beautiful!"

Graziella was so absorbed in the contemplation of the picture and the memories

it called forth that she did not notice the entrance of Frederic, who gently approached her, and after listening with thoughtful face to her enthusiastic monologue, touched her cheek lightly with a trembling finger and said, —

"Are you praying, little one?"

"Oh, no! signor; I was thinking that these sketches must be worth something, — at least this one of my own country."

"I had forgotten them, little one," he answered.

"This one of Sorrento, signor, is beautiful; how well I know it! It needs only Salvatore in it to make it perfect."

"Salvatore," he repeated, gazing down thoughtfully at the flushed, excited face of the girl.

"My intended husband, signor; he lives in the place you have so beautifully painted."

"And are you so anxious to see him again, little one?"

The girl did not answer in words, but tears welled up to her eyes, and her lips

trembled. The man turned aside and walked to the dusty window, and in a moment the girl was by his side.

"Your soul speaks in that picture, signor. It is lovely, — better, far better than that," she added, pointing to the famous "Nero's Dream."

"You shall see Salvatore, little one," said the artist, gazing sadly at the girl; "but leave me now, for I have no need of you this morning."

There was yet a day to spare before the expiration of the time in which his pictures were to be sent to the exhibition.

When Graziella left the room, "Nero's Dream" was turned to the wall and was never finished. Two weeks later, Frederic had the satisfaction of seeing his "Sorrento" admirably hung at the Academy, where it was enthusiastically praised, and, what is better, was sold at an extravagant and unlooked-for price to an enthusiastic millionnaire.

One day, when Graziella was again posing for our friend, and looking more pen-

sive than usual, Frederic suddenly surprised her by asking how much money was yet lacking to make up the sum of the coveted five hundred dollars.

"Alas! signor, three hundred dollars," was the mournful reply. "I shall not see Salvatore for many a year."

"And are you so anxious to see him, little one?"

"My heart would break, signor, without that hope. He is my life, my soul!"

The artist sighed, and stared gloomily at the young girl.

"Are you angry with me, signor?" she asked timidly.

"Angry, little one? No! See, my child, here are three hundred dollars. Take them; they are honestly yours, for without you they would never have been earned. Through you I sold my Italian sketch, and I give you this to take you back to Italy and to — Salvatore! One kiss, my child, as a memory, and then good-by to you forever."

And this is the reason that, ten days

later, the little model bade farewell to New York, to return to her native land and to her Salvatore, whom perhaps she has been able to keep awake by relating to him her wonderful experiences in the great city beyond the sea.

WHO WAS HE?

WHO WAS HE?

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy." — SHAKSPEARE.

IF the story I am about to narrate seems strange, even incomprehensible, to the reader, I beg to state from the very first that I myself am of the same opinion about it. Though I actually witnessed and even took part in the strange occurrences I am about to relate; though I lived for years in intimate intercourse with the strange being I have again heard from so unexpectedly but a few days ago, — yet I am still entirely unable to explain what I have seen. I simply state facts, leaving it to the reader to draw what inferences he may choose.

In the autumn of the year 1864 I entered the University of St. Petersburg. Having passed my childhood and early youth in Germany and in England, I had naturally but few acquaintances in Russia; and though a Russian by birth, I had some trouble in mastering the language sufficiently to follow the course of studies I had selected. I worked hard, and avoided the society of other students of my class, — first, because as a set of light-headed young "swells" belonging to rich and aristocratic families, bent much more on amusement than on study, they would have interfered with my occupations; and secondly, because even then I was imbued with those political ideas which have since had such a powerful influence on my whole life, and which naturally kept me from mingling with representatives of a class which I hated as the source of misery and oppression.

For a young man not yet out of his teens I led a rather solitary, almost monastic, life. But though not mingling with society

in its brilliant and noisy manifestations, I was a careful observer of the earnest current of discontent which undermined it, and which even then was preparing the powerful revolutionary movement now in progress. Having no personal connection with the representatives of the radical party of the time, I confined myself to reading diligently the publications which, within the narrow limits of the Russian press censorship, were considered the mouthpieces of the advanced party. The *Sovremennik* (Contemporary) and the *Russkoye Sioso* (Russian World), both edited by some of the most distinguished publicists and critics Russia has ever possessed, were always to be found on my table. And with what eager enthusiasm I cut the sheets of a new critical essay of Dobroluboff, a new poem of Nekrassoff, "the poet of Russian woe and sorrow," some newly published politico-economical article of Tchernyshevsky, who was then pining in a subterranean dungeon of the "Peter and Paul fortress" at St. Petersburg,

previous to being buried alive in the town of Eastern Siberia to which he was later sent. The writings of these men were my only companions; and as I knew that in this respect I should find neither comprehension nor sympathy on the part of most of my "aristocratic" fellow-students, I held aloof from them.

Among the throng of young faces which I met daily in the lecture-hall was one which had struck me from the very first, and not agreeably. It was that of a young man dressed always with the utmost elegance. This face wore a curiously mingled look of juvenile freshness and deep melancholy, the latter mostly concealed under a bland smile, which gave to the whole countenance a cunning and insinuating expression. The melancholy lay in the eyes, which looked old and lifeless out of the young, fresh face. This contrast between the eyes and the rest of the face was peculiarly striking, disagreeable, and at the same time fascinating. Wherever that queer face appeared I

could not help feeling myself attracted by it; and this attraction seemed to me mutual, for as often as I looked up to it I could feel those sad, pensive eyes fixed on me.

On one bitter cold night as I walked home from the university, muffled in my fur-coat up to the ears, I heard the footsteps of a man following me, and on turning round found myself face to face with the young student I have mentioned.

"Do not let me detain you," he said, touching his beaver cap; "the evening is cold, and we can talk while we walk, and finish our conversation in your room, as you will certainly invite me to take a cup of tea with you."

He laughed as he spoke, and that same cunning, disagreeable smile I had so often noticed lit up his face.

"You doubtless consider me," he continued, "a very impertinent fellow. Never mind; bear with me for an hour or so, and then we are sure to be the best friends

in the world, — that is, if I am not greatly mistaken in you."

There was a frank, guileless tone in his speech which prevented my getting angry with him.

"If you are so sure about our becoming friends so soon," I answered, laughing, "you will perhaps be kind enough to mention your name."

"Certainly; my name is Michael Somoff."

We walked on in silence. On reaching the door of my house I stopped.

"Well," exclaimed Somoff, "you do not invite me to step in. Oh, what an inhospitable wretch you are! Very well, I will not trouble you any longer; but if you read in to-morrow's paper that a frozen corpse, belonging to Michael Somoff, student at law, has been found in the street, then may my blood and that of my future children rest on your soul!"

What could I answer? Of course I laughed, opened my door, and invited him to enter.

Half an hour later we were engaged in a most lively and engrossing conversation. I found in Somoff a man of extensive learning and experience. An article about the rate of wages in the manufacturing districts of Russia, which had just then appeared in one of the monthly reviews, furnished him the occasion of displaying a thorough knowledge of the customs, ways of life, and economical condition of the working classes in the different provinces of the empire, which was surprising in so young a representative of the "fashionable" youth of the capital. That our political opinions were identical, Somoff seemed to take for granted from the very first. But while my revolutionary propensities bore rather the character of an undeveloped instinct, his political creed, as it appeared in every word he spoke, was matured by experience and a profound, earnest study of Russian national life.

After an hour's talk the man had entirely bewitched me. I am unable to find another

word to express the peculiar influence he gained over my mind. Everything he said appeared to me so true, so noble, so full of authority, that I scarcely ventured to take part in the conversation, and let him speak and speak, listening to his clear, metallic voice as to a sweet melody.

At last he stopped, and rising abruptly, looked at his watch.

"It is nine o'clock; and I had promised to call on poor little Adèle at eight!"

The man seemed suddenly transformed. The political enthusiast, the eloquent speaker had disappeared. Before me stood, with the same insipid smile on his lips, the "swell" whose appearance had so often repulsed me.

"Do you know Adèle?" he continued. "A charming little girl. I will introduce you one of these days. Now, good-by, my friend! I hope to find in you soon a worthy pupil of Dr. Dillmann," he added in an earnest undertone.

"Dillmann!" I repeated, transfixed with

amazement. "What do you know about him?"

But Somoff had already left the room and closed the door behind him.

I was utterly bewildered. Dr. Dillmann was one of the ablest leaders of the German democracy, whom I had frequently met in Heidelberg, and who had exercised a powerful influence on my political opinions. How could Somoff, who, as he said, had never left Russia, know about my relations with that man?

The next morning when I met Somoff in the lecture-room, this was naturally the first question I asked him. He did not, however, answer directly. On my pressing him with questions he at length said, —

"There is nothing extraordinary in this; we have had our eyes on you a long time."

Saying which, he left me abruptly and disappeared in the throng of students which just then crowded the entrance-door. This one word "we" threw me into the profoundest and most joyful excitement.

The melancholy solitude in which I had hitherto lived weighed heavily on my mind, the more so as I knew of the existence of some secret association, the members of which pursued the same social and political purposes as those to which I was devoted. Was I at last to come into contact with one of these associations?

A prey to a feverish agitation, I ran the same evening to Somoff's room. I found him at home, but succeeded in learning but little from him. He seemed absent and worn out, spoke of two sleepless nights he had passed, and at last put me unceremoniously out, saying that he expected a visit from a man who preferred not to be seen. At the same time he dropped a few hints showing his knowledge of some facts of my past life which I had hitherto considered unknown to all except myself.

Weeks of morbid, feverish excitement followed, during which Somoff held me as in a dream of mystery, intrigue, and bewilderment. I met him daily, and countless

trifles showed me that my every step was watched and reported to him. I felt myself in the hands of some unknown, invisible power; but to all my questions as to the nature of that power Somoff answered invariably, —

"Patience, my friend! You are not ripe yet."

At length (our acquaintance was already three months old) he seemed to yield to my entreaties. One night as we were closeted together in a *cabinet particulier* at Dusaux's (one of the fashionable restaurants of St. Petersburg), my mysterious friend suddenly exclaimed, —

"So you want to be one of us?"

"First tell me at length who you are," I replied.

Somoff looked at me fixedly with his sad, lustreless eyes. His whole face took an expression of weariness and old age I had never before witnessed, and his voice had a peculiarly hollow sound in it as he spoke to me.

"Child, child," he said, "I fear you know

not what you ask or what you wish! We are outcasts; we are men who have abjured every personal aim, affection, or passion in life; we have given up our whole being to the service of one idea, and have severed all human ties that make life worth living to the rest of mankind. Not only our life (that would be nothing), but our honor, our pride, the desire to love and to be loved, — all that is killed in us, and must be sacrificed at any time if our holy cause requires it. You have been educated in the traditions of German democracy; do not expect to find here anything approaching the comfortable and so to say 'home-made' concern of what the people there call 'revolution.' Here we live in the realm of darkness, and have to work in the dark. Not even the prestige of becoming celebrated is awarded us. Restless, hopeless, all-absorbing is our work; we have renounced all the joys of life; we are" — he stopped, and seemed to seek for an adequate expression — "we are the monks of the Russian revolution! Wilt thou become such a monk?"

Bewildered, almost frightened by this sudden outburst of gloomy passion, I answered in a low voice,—

"First tell me more about the purpose and strength of your society."

"The purpose?" he rejoined. "You know well enough,— it is the struggle with and ultimate overthrow of czardom, and a reorganization of all the economical and political institutions of our country. Our strength? Well, have you not had during the past few months countless proofs of our power? Have I not shown you that we have devoted servants and agents everywhere? More I cannot tell you. If you wish to work with us you must believe and obey me and only me — blindly; you must do always and only whatever I order you to do. For years, perhaps forever, I shall be the sole connecting link between you and the power, the true representatives of which will remain concealed from you. Do you consent to these conditions?"

I was then so entirely under the influence

of this strange man that I would joyfully have consented to almost anything he could have proposed to me.

That night a strange life began for me. I was obliged to leave off nearly all my studies, for my time was engrossed by occupations the precise nature of which I was unable to understand. Somoff kept me constantly on the move. Obeying his order, I began to lead a busy, almost dissipated society life; and before going to a ball or to a *soirée* I invariably received my instructions as to whom I was to speak and what I had to find out and report.

At intervals a horrible idea struck me.

"In fact, what I am doing," I thought, "is the work of a spy. What if all this is but a ghastly, horrible mummery? What if Somoff is the agent not of a secret political association, but of some other secret power, — perhaps of the terrible Third Section of the secret police itself?"

I repelled this frightful suspicion, as unworthy of a man like Somoff; but still it haunted me sometimes, putting still more uneasiness and excitement into my mind.

Once Somoff came to me in the early morning, before daylight, and awakening me from a deep slumber, gave me a sealed package, saying, —

"Keep this, it is a document of the utmost importance. You are as yet unsuspected by the police, so it is safe in your hands. But do not deliver it to any one under any pretext whatever. Good-by; I am in a hurry."

A moment later he had disappeared, leaving a large sealed envelope on my bed. I got up, lighted a candle, and examined carefully the package intrusted to my care. It was a large quarto envelope, sealed with a plain seal and bearing no address. On examining it more closely, however, I remarked that the outer envelope inclosed another, and that the latter bore a direction. Looking about

me anxiously, as if fearing that the very walls might see and betray me, I held the package as near as possible to the light, and tried to decipher the inscription I had discovered on the second envelope.

As long as I live I shall never forget the unspeakable horror which overcame me as one letter after another of this fatal address struck my eye. I read, —

To his Excellency
Victor Vassilievitch Schultz,
Secretary of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Private Chancery.

With trembling hands, drops of cold sweat falling from my brow, I tore open the envelope and began reading the inclosed manuscript with feverish haste. It contained, in Somoff's handwriting, a monthly report of the actions and mode of life of a number of persons for which I — I myself — had furnished the material!

Why I did not go mad in that horrible

moment I do not know. Mechanically I threw some clothes on and rushed into the street. It was a bitter cold morning, and I ran out in a light coat and without a hat; but I felt not the cold. I rushed at a breathless pace to where Somoff lived. I found his door locked. With a superhuman effort I broke it open and entered. Somoff, who had been writing at his table, rose at the noise I made, and stood now facing me.

"What is the matter?" he asked in his cold, sarcastic tone.

"Scoundrel!" I gasped, throwing the envelope into his face.

He quickly picked it up, and seeing that I had opened it, said with unutterable sadness in his voice, —

"So you have not borne the test!"

"Scoundrel!" I repeated, seizing him by the throat. But at the same time I felt my senses fail me, and fell back unconscious.

When I recovered, I found myself lying on Somoff's bed, he looking at me

with an expression of longing melancholy in his eyes which went straight to my heart.

"Get up!" he said, speaking slowly and with difficulty. "You must hate me. You are right; I have deceived you. Go, leave me!"

I obeyed, and without saying a word opened the door. Suddenly Somoff exclaimed, in a voice of heartrending anguish, —

"Oh, trust in me! Cannot you trust in me?"

Then, as if recollecting himself, he added, —

"No, I forgot. Go; leave me! I have deceived you; there is no such association as the one I spoke to you about. I am a spy, a wretched, despicable creature. Farewell!"

I closed the door, and that was the last time I ever saw Michael Somoff.

All these events, however, had seriously injured my health. A violent brain-fever attacked me, during which I lay for more

than two weeks unconscious. Sometimes as in a dream it seemed to me that amidst the troubled, fantastic shapes the demon Fever conjured up in my brain there appeared the sad, pensive face of Michael Somoff. But this was doubtless an illusion; for when on recovering I asked the Sister of Charity I found sitting at my bedside if a man of the name of Somoff had come to see me, she answered no, but that the Count Ivan Troubetzkoi had been a constant visitor, and that he had engaged her, the Sister, for me.

How strange! I thought. The Count was a somewhat eccentric personage, immensely rich, but leading a secluded life in his great palace of the Fontanka. I had met him several times in society and been introduced to him; but nothing in our intercourse warranted the interest he seemed now to take in me.

In the afternoon of the same day the Count called on me, and cutting short the expression of gratitude I was about to

utter, exclaimed, shaking me heartily by the hand, —

"I am very glad to see you doing so well, and was very happy to have been able to render you a little service. Do not forget that your father and I were friends."

The Count was a middle-aged man, nearly bald, and looked at least double my age. And yet as he sat before me with the light falling full into his face, a strange resemblance struck me, — the eyes, those gray, lustreless, lifeless eyes, were Somoff's; there could be no doubt of it. The more I looked at them, the more I tried to persuade myself of the madness of my supposition, the more I felt convinced that those eyes could belong but to one man, and that that man was Somoff.

The Count noticed my confusion, and rising, said, "You seem to be a little tired now; I will go."

He gave me his hand; then stopping at the door, he turned round once more, and

I heard him — no, not him, not the Count, I heard the voice, the actual voice of Michael Somoff, say, —

"Live on happy, my child, and keep aloof from our gloomy work."

I would have leaped out of bed if the Sister of Charity had not held me back by main force.

"Who is that man?" I gasped.

"Be quiet, sir," she replied; "it is the Count Ivan Petruvitch Troubetzkoi, your excellent friend."

After my recovery I was obliged to leave St. Petersburg abruptly. A *razzia* on all "suspected" persons had taken place, and among others I was informed that I had to leave the capital in twenty-four hours.

Thus began my life of homeless wandering, which has lasted ever since. Of Somoff I heard nothing, till about a year ago a Russian friend in New York showed me a copy of one of the clandestine Russian publications, in which the public was warned against a certain Michael Somoff,

suspected of being a secret agent of the police. The same number brought the report that Count Ivan Troubetzkoi had been arrested on suspicion of being concerned in some conspiracy, and had been released the same day. All this did not in any way tend to solve the mystery which surrounded these two men.

Some ten days ago I received a letter bearing the stamp of Post-Office Station D in New York City. On opening it I read the following words: —

> Farewell, friend! I have sacrificed and destroyed all that is human in me. For the sake of our cause I have borne with contempt and slander; I have lost your friendship. Now human nature takes back its right, its last right, — that of self-destruction. I have accomplished the work. I want rest, eternal rest. Farewell!
>
> MICHAEL SOMOFF.

What did this letter mean? All researches were vain. Had the unfortunate man indeed found the repose he longed for in the deep waters of the Hudson, or was this

letter but a stratagem on the part of this extraordinary being?

I know not; neither do I attempt, as I have said before, to unravel this riddle. It stands before me dark as the Sphinx, and time alone will solve it, if it ever be solved.

THE ELF OF HOHENHEIM.

THE ELF OF HOHENHEIM.

ON descending the Volga years and years ago on a radiant moonlight night in midsummer, I entered into conversation with an old Russian sectarian patriarch whom I met on board the boat, and with whom — as always happens when I meet one of these extraordinary men — I was soon deeply engaged in a theological discussion.

"Can you tell me, Father Onufry," I asked in the course of the conversation, "on what, besides the Scriptures, you base your faith in an eternal life of bliss beyond the grave?"

The old man raised his white head from his bosom, and extending his hand towards

the endless steppes which border the river, said in a solemn voice, —

"On the immensity of human misery on earth!"

Through time and space this answer rings in my ears in all its unutterable sadness as the last and highest expression of the whole martyr-nation's misery; and the longer I live, the deeper and fuller becomes the stream of humanity running past me on the broad and rugged causeway of life, the more I learn to fathom the depth of those simple words, —

"On the immensity of human misery on earth!"

It was on a Saturday night in the Bowery, when I was returning on foot at a slow pace from my office, intent upon the picture of busy life and confusion which surrounded me, and which for years had never been so noisy and bustling as then. The "good times" had set in; and like a huge monster stretching out his limbs after years of prostration, the great city was

sending out of all its thoroughfares thousands and thousands of its population, bent on enjoying life, on putting to immediate profit the gains of the day while the rising tide should last, and before the ebb should set in again. Though the hour was late, the stores were ablaze with light and thronged with customers. On the sidewalk the bustle was so great that I had some pains in pushing my way along: women, bending under the load of baskets and parcels, chatted, laughed, and screamed as they went; parties of men, strolling with pipes and cigars in their mouths, were enjoying the clear, mild night after a hard week's work; pairs of "our boys," swaggering along with all the imperturbable and inimitable impertinence peculiar to the promising offshoots of Young America, blocked up occasionally the whole sidewalk, spitting and brawling in the most accomplished fashion, and occasionally interchanging some choice epithet of endearment or ridicule with parties of "girls," who, as to the noise they made, were in no

way inferior to the stronger sex. Italian peanut-venders, with their dark Southern faces lighted by the flaring torches surrounding their stands, advertised their goods in a shrill mixture of Italian and Irish-American; pedlers babbled out their endless stories, collecting groups of the ubiquitous loafer around them. In the midst of all this turmoil the discordant sounds of a street-organ performing the "Wacht am Rhein" pierced through the other sounds, and an old bald-headed Frenchman, with a long white beard, bawled out the "Marseillaise" at the top of his voice.

Slowly I advanced amid all this bustle, admiring and in some measure fascinated by this picture, so full of a coarse but intense and robust life, and on which the lights in the store-windows, the petroleum torches of the street-venders, the stained, multi-colored gas-lamps of the dime museum and other places of equivocal and unequivocal amusement, shed a lurid, almost fantastic glare. All of a sudden I

stopped as if struck by lightning. What was this before me? A ghost; a horrible freak of my imagination, — or what?

That ashy pale face, that stooping figure, creeping along with difficulty and thrown from side to side by the busy crowd like a broken reed, — where had I seen a semblance of them before?

This ghastly figure was that of a woman. By the hand she led a child, a baby of some three years of age, who seemed so exhausted that its legs refused service entirely. It did not even scream, but let itself be dragged along by the woman like a lifeless corpse. I turned round and followed this wretched pair. I soon found out that the woman's walk was not purposeless. She staggered from one ash-barrel to another; at each of these ornaments of our metropolitan thoroughfares she stooped down, plunged her bare arm into the heap of refuse, and kept it there, searching till she had found some remnant of something which might one day have served as food for man or beast. This she

clutched at with eager grasp; the best bits she gave to the child, the rest she devoured herself.

And in the mean time the busy, roaring wave of humanity rolled past her as coldly and indifferently as if it were indeed a billow of the ocean, and not a living throng of men, of whom thousands would the very next morning worship in proud self-complacency the Christian God, — the God of mercy, charity, and love!

Stepping to her side, I touched the woman's shoulder. She looked around with a wild and scared expression as the light of a torch fell full on her face. "Good God! is it possible?" I screamed, "Emily!"

Her whole frame shook under the rags which half covered it; she drew back from me, and with a groan of irrepressible terror attempted to run away. I held her fast, however.

"Come, now," I said, "whoever you may be. Think of your child, — it seems to be dying; let me give it something to eat." She bowed her head in silent obedience

and suffered me to lead her to a small hotel in the neighborhood kept by an honest old German on whose discretion I could reckon. I engaged a room, ordered a supper and a bottle of strong wine, and bidding the woman wash and undress herself and the child, I went out to purchase in one of the Bowery stores a cheap but decent outfit for both, which on returning to the hotel I sent up to her by the chambermaid. A quarter of an hour later supper was brought. I knocked at her door, a feeble voice answered, "Come in," and on entering I remained two or three seconds standing motionless, speechless, at the door, staring at the apparition before me. The hasty toilet she had made had wrought an extraordinary change in all the young woman's appearance. She sat before me with the child in her lap in all her wondrous, delicate, bewitching beauty, the "elf of Hohenheim," as we used to call her; but no longer the wild, wayward, elf-like child, but such as I had seen her in my boyish dreams, — a beautiful, fairy-like woman!

"Emily Rechberg," I whispered when the chambermaid had left us, "do you know me?"

She looked up at me, and dropping her head into both her hands, broke into a torrent of tears. After soothing and quieting her as best I could, I insisted on her and the child eating the supper I had ordered before entering on any explanations. After the last morsel had disappeared, and the child, which had already fallen asleep while eating, had been put to bed, Emily sat down by my side, and with many a sigh and many a tear told me her story. It was the sad, old, old story.

I was barely seventeen, and had just entered the celebrated Academy of Agriculture at Hohenheim, near Stuttgart, Würtemberg, when I first made the acquaintance of Emily and of her uncle, the famous mathematician, Dr. Aloysius Rechberg, with whom, having lost her parents, she then lived. The old professor's house was a favorite haunt of all us boys.

Himself childless, but yet full of energy and animal spirits, the old man liked to be surrounded by the noise and bustle of youth. On some evenings of the week, and indeed not unfrequently during whole days, the professor's house looked more like a student's *kneipe* (tavern) than the abode of one of the first scientific authorities of Germany. In the snug parlor on the first-floor of the lovely cottage Rechberg occupied stood a large oak-table, surrounded with old-fashioned carved-wood chairs. Many a joyous, never-to-be-forgotten night of mirth and delightful entertainment have we passed there, — youth and happiness in our hearts, the foaming beer-glass before us, and the professor's hearty voice and laugh cheering us to new mirth, and giving us the example of youth and joy.

Little Emily, "elf of Hohenheim," as we had nicknamed her, never failed at these queer assemblies. Indeed she was the genius, the spirit of our band; and a mad, uncontrollable spirit it was, to be sure!

Scarcely fifteen years of age, she was already as far advanced in her studies with her uncle as any of us.

"I don't want to make of the girl one of your insipid hot-house flowers, which droop and shudder at everything," the old man used to say to us. "Let her see, study, and enjoy life just as it is. You are all of you a set of honest, though excessively lazy lads, at whose hands she has no harm to fear. So let her enjoy her freedom, — the only thing she possesses, poor thing! I trust her to you; do not deceive me, lads."

And Emily was indeed our friend, our comrade, — almost our sister. She felt so secure inside the domain of her adopted brothers that she wandered in summer and winter all alone through the extensive woods of Hohenheim, considering them, as it were, a sort of paradise on earth, in which no fatal tree or wily serpent could ever tempt her. Elf-like, she haunted the grounds around our academy, climbing in the trees, imitating the singing

of the birds around her, making the air resound with her clear, silvery laugh, shedding on all things the fairy light of her dear, innocent presence. Such she had lived on in my remembrance these many years since our parting. Such, as the long-lost dream of youth and light, she appeared at times to me amid the dark shadows and bitter realities of life. Who was the villain that had darkened and polluted this bright vision of light? Who had made *this* of my little "elf of Hohenheim?"

His name was, she told me, — or at least was supposed to be, — Count Ladislas Brodzinsky, and he pretended to be a Polish nobleman of immense wealth. Like the rest of the students, he too had been received with the usual free hospitality at the professor's house, but had soon by his manner excited the old man's suspicions. He was forbidden the house; but the mischief was already done, — Emily was madly in love with him. Interviews went on between them clandestinely; the wretch bewitched her more and more, until at length

she consented to elope with him to America, whither, he said, important business matters called him. The pair fled first to Paris, thence to London, where they stayed nearly a week. While in that city Brodzinsky came home one day seemingly a prey to terrible agitation.

"Somebody is on our track, my dearest Emily!" he exclaimed. "I have been followed the whole day. We cannot start from here together. You must go to-night direct to Queenstown, and wait a day there for the boat which shall bring me from Liverpool. The people who are tracking me must see me get on board alone. Do you trust me, my love?"

Of course she did, and obeyed him guilelessly, confidingly. Long before the steamer had been sighted she was standing on the Queenstown dock, waiting, straining her eyes for the streak of smoke on the horizon. At length it came. The tug-boat took the Queenstown passengers on board the huge ocean steamer. Emily found her cabin reserved for her, but no

Ladislas Brodzinsky to meet her. Trembling, bewildered, she inquired if there was a passenger of that name on board. The steward who had accompanied her to the cabin thought there was, and promised to inquire immediately.

He went, and Emily remained in her cabin trembling, fearing she knew not what, feeling as if each minute that passed became a century of suspense. In the mean time the steamer had heaved her anchor, the screw had been put in motion, and the ocean monster glided majestically into the open sea.

At length the steward returned with the answer: "No, miss, there is no gentleman of that name on board!"

On hearing these words Emily remained for some time like one paralyzed by terror and despair. Then realizing all of a sudden the horror of her situation, she rushed out of the cabin with a piercing cry and ran on deck, whence, had not the captain met her and held her fast, she would have jumped into the sea.

She then began beseeching the captain in a frantic way to turn back, to put her on shore anywhere; the poor man had a good deal of trouble to explain to her the impossibility of her demand, and to quiet her so far as to lead her back into the cabin. She need but wait patiently, he said; in New York she would be sure to find a telegram explaining all.

She waited, but in vain; no message, no friendly word bade her welcome to the New World. The captain and some of the passengers took an interest in the poor girl, and accompanied her to the German consulate. There she gave her uncle's address, and the consul promised her to cable to him immediately. The next day she was to learn the answer. She came the next day. The consul led her to his private office, and with a grave face invited her to take a seat.

"Have you other relatives in Germany, Miss Rechberg, besides your uncle?" he inquired.

"None," she answered.

"I regret it," rejoined the consul, "for your uncle is dead. Here is the answer I received this morning." And he showed her the fatal message.

Emily had suffered so much during the passage that this new blow could scarcely hurt, but only stun her. She sat there motionless, staring at the paper before her with a vacant gaze.

"Do you wish, under the circumstances," continued the German official, "to return to Europe? I could facilitate your arrangements if such should be your wish."

"What for?" she asked dejectedly.

"Just as you please," answered the consul. She rose from her seat, thanked him mechanically, and went out into the street.

"Oh! do not ask me," exclaimed Emily, covering her face with her hands, "to tell you all that befell me here. It is a tale of shame and misery I will spare you and myself. Four months after my landing, this child — his child — was born. Some time later I received a letter from him offering me money, and explaining his treachery

with perfect frankness. My love, he said, had become troublesome to him, for just then the possibility of a rich marriage with a woman older than himself and exceedingly jealous had presented itself to him, and thus he resolved to put me out of the way. How well he knew me! In writing this letter he placed a deadly weapon in my hand: he knew well enough I should not use it."

The night was far advanced when Emily had told me her sad story to the end. I took leave of her, promising to come back the next morning, and not to forsake her till a suitable position had presented itself for her.

I came, and returned the next day and the next, and so on for nearly three weeks, until, little by little, the intercourse with Emily became the most engrossing occupation of my day.

She became daily more beautiful, and daily I saw revived before me the fair image of the "elf of Hohenheim" of my boyish dreams, turned to a still more bewitching reality.

One day, as I entered as usual the little German hotel, the fat host came to meet me with a letter in his hand.

"For you," he said laconically.

I tore open the envelope. It was from Emily, and contained the following lines:

MY DEAREST, MY ONLY FRIEND, — I leave you who have saved me, whom I have learned to love more than my life; and it is just because of my great love that I go. Your life must remain as it is, — pure and free and noble. Your path must not be soiled by a creature like me. Farewell! God bless you! May every tear which falls from my cheek while I write this bring you years and years of happiness! Do not grieve for me. I have found honest work in another city far away. Do not search for me, and do not quite forget your poor, loving

ELF OF HOHENHEIM.

A year has passed; I have never seen or heard from her since.

University Press: John Wilson & Son, Cambridge.

BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 9999 09874 417 8